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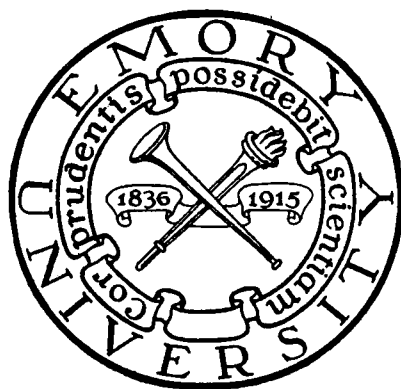
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MRS. BROWN

ON

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BY

ARTHUR SKETCHLEY

AUTHOR OF

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MRS. BROWN ON HOME RULE.

PREFACE.

IN course I'd 'eard speak of 'Ome Rule over in Horsetrailier, as is the same as Ireland, as is, we all know, "the Jim of the Oshun," and they may well call it the Green Isle, for the way they lets themselves be led by 'Ead Centres, and Finnyans, and sich like is quite surprisin', as does 'em out of their money, and reglar 'umbugs 'em, the same as them radical fellers over in Melbung, a-tellin' the workin' men as if they'd wote for them to be prime ministers they'd prove so, and get work for 'em all ; but sung a werry different song when they 'ad got in, and them poor men went up by the thousin' to the Parlymint to ask for work, and was told to step it, as the Govermint couldn't do nothink for 'em, so come away from the Parlymint 'Ouse a-grumblin', with their tails atween their legs, as the sayin' is,

but will some day take things in their own 'ands, and in my opinion smash up the lot, prime minister, Parlymint, and all.

As to 'Ome Rule in the Colonies there ain't nothink else nowhere's, and they're all pullin' diff'rent ways—Melbung a-wantin', in course, to be boss over all the others, as won't stand it thro' bein' the smallest and newest of the lot, and 'ave sprung up like a mushroom in the night.

I says to Brown, jest as we was a-startin' 'ome-wards, "Mark my words, if we ain't a-goin' to get into nice 'ot water all over the place;" and never shall forget arrivin' in London with that snow storm the werry next day, as no doubt killed many thousin's, jest the same as them Bores is a-doin' over in the Cape, as wants 'Ome Rule there, and must be put down, no doubt jest the same as them as won't obey the laws in Ireland, tho' in course there 'as been orful bad laws there as is now done away, a many on 'em leastways, as the rest would soon foller if parties would go the right way to work, as ain't not payin' your rent and shootin' at parties from behind a 'edge, as didn't make the laws and must live on their property; as I've 'eard speak of some old ladies as is 'arf starvin' thro' not gettin' a trifle from Ireland, as is all their livin', so I do 'ope as all them as is fair dealin' will take and pay up, and give up them shootin's, and then there

won't be no occasions for to put them new laws in force, as in course riles the Hirish people, and no doubt the innercent will suffer for the guilty, as in course is ruff a-comin' from them Liberals, and only shows wot rubbish it all is old Gladstin a-goin' about a-stumpin' all over the place about liberty and free ways; as is all werry well in their way, but don't do when it comes to makin' free with other people's property; not but wot in course John Bright, he wouldn't correct nobody in the world, and would be pleased if nobody wouldn't pay 'im rent, and don't 'ave a silver spoon nor nothink in his 'ouse but a three-legged stool and a blackin' bottle, and as if thieves was to come they'd find nothink, as 'ave been sold and give to the poor; and if they was to take all his clothes he'd give 'em the rest, along with 'is umbreller, without giving 'em in charge, as wouldn't 'ave nobody 'ung, not if they was to murder 'im over and over agin; and as to this 'ere war over at the Cape, he won't let the sojers 'ave powder and shot enuf, as is 'ow they're bein' killed by them Bores; and as to wotin' money in Parlymint for to keep up the harmy, he wouldn't 'ave it not if they was to lock 'im up all night like a jury, with 'is pockets full of oranges and sandwiches, as is wot I calls a consistent man, and hacts up to what he calls 'is principles, tho' it's agin 'is own interests, won't never take none for 'is money,

and is a-waitin' at 'ome all day with piles of it ready for to lend to anyone as asks 'im, but only on their promisin' solim as they'll never pay 'im back.

But talkin' of Bores, wot a preshus old bore that Lord Mare must be as won't allow no dancin', tho' he is Irish, as delights in 'avin' a fling and a reel, tho', in course, he can't stop some on 'em from reelin' 'ome arter dinners, as is that plain and no licker, the same as John Bright, as never dances with no capers to biled mutton, as the only luxury at 'is table is tapioker puddin', with no eggs, is all he allows on a Sunday, and never keeps Christmas Day, and wouldn't eat a bit of plum-pudding nor a mince pie, tho' they would settle 'is love and bring 'im luck, but pre'aps might not agree with 'im, thro' never bein' used to 'em when a child, as didn't never ought to be allowed to over-eat themselves, tho' only a Quaker, 'cos some of them serous fam'lies never 'as no pleasures but eatin' and drinkin', as 'ave been to many the hend of their existence, as will underminde the British constitution in time, even more than drink, as is only greed in another way arter all, tho' some gets that 'abit of constant tipplin', as tho' it may make 'em feel gay, brings 'em to their graves premature, and 'urries 'em into eternity afore their time, as is 'ow Mrs. Blogg came to overlay 'er two children in the Burrer Road, tho' some did say as it were jealousy,

as were not rich enuf to be made out mad, tho' she were in the fancy cap and bonnet line, as were set up by a party as she lived servint to the same business somewheres in the City.

I wish as them Bores and Africanders would 'Ome Rule theirselves, and not be a-askin' us to send over sojers to 'elp 'em cut one another's throats, as is always a-quarrellin' over somethink, partikler the parson, as is always in 'ot water ; and one place we was in one on 'em 'ad put 'is feet into it one Sunday mornin', and couldn't put it to the ground thro' gout all night, as the Bishop took and escommunicated out of 'is own church, and 'ad to be carried there in blankets to read the prayers, as he never would 'ave got thro' but for colchicum, as kep' 'im out of the pulpit, so in course no sermon ; but give it the Bishop 'ot from the readin'-desk, with a foot-pan of bilin' water on a chafin'-dish to keep up the steam, as did 'im 'arm, thro' bein' that inflammatory, and caught a chill in goin' 'ome, jest arter 'is wife 'ad come back from a wisit as would 'ave took the matter in 'er own 'ands, as knowed a somethink about the Bishop's wife and the Archdeacon, as was all old womin together, so could give them their quieturs, as the sayin' is, with 'arf a eye, as is jest wot she'd got for everythink, thro' bein' that orful squint, as were one eye up the chimbley and the other in the pot, as the sayin' is,

and they do say were 'is look afore ever he entered the Church, as he never put 'is foot in till past thirty, thro' 'avin' been in a marchin' regyment, as is a milingtary career, as is the way a many 'ave began life, while some 'ave took to the sea, as 'ended mishunaries, and one of them come 'ome, and were a Bishop, tho' he was always longin' to be back among the 'eathen, as was that fond on 'im as made quite a idol on 'im, and werry nigh eat 'im up, so he never did go back, as were keepin' temptation out of their way, but he fretted arter 'em up to the last, as was proved in 'is will, where he spoke on 'em like a father, tho' he did not leave 'em any money, as were not to be expected, thro' 'avin' cut off 'is own son with a shillin', as 'ad cut off with a young lady, as he married for love, from a boardin' school, as 'adn't a penny to bless themselves with, tho' the old man left fifty thousin' all to his widder, as were his second, and forty years younger, as 'ad a fine fortun of 'er own, and married a barernite as ruined 'isself and 'er too on the turf in five years. Wotever we goes a-wor-retin' our 'eads about Bores over there, I can't think, when we've got such a lot on 'em at 'ome as wants a regular 'Ome Rule to keep them down, as is more than many on us can do inside our own doors, let alone Ireland and them colonials. For there were Old Lenkinton, as were the biggest bore

as ever were 'eard on, as 'is wife did used to set on every time as he opened 'is mouth to tell them long stories about the West Hinges, as werry nigh carried 'im off with 'arf the regyment thro' yaller fever, as were left for dead, and would 'ave been berried only he were overlooked in the 'urry, and come round before daylight, as nearly frightened the coloured nuss to death at seein' 'im set up, and give a yell a-thinkin' as she were Old Nick comin' for to take 'im where he'd 'ave been long ago, if wishes could 'ave 'elped 'im there, as I 'eard 'is own son-in-law espressin' 'isself with my own ears.

Tho' I did 'ear a old coloured lady say as that old man never were a sojer, but only tailor to the regyment, and nearly got 'ung to the yard 'isself, goin' out, thro' leavin' of a needle in a officer's regymentals, as run into 'is knee and broke off close to the eye, as were drored out thro' a load-stone, as steel always turns to, like water a-findin' its level, as is wot that officer did in fallin' off 'is 'orse at a naval review, and found settin' in hagony on deck as hard as a rock as he'd reglar split upon, as the sayin' is, from 'ead to foot, as shows as he must 'ave been that tight as couldn't bear no strain, or else took in by the sewin' machine, as often goes back on you, as they all say in Merryka; tho' the Princess of Wales does 'ave three as she works on at once, and I do 'ope she ain't got no

traddle, and don't set too close to it, as I've seen a pichter of 'er a-doin', as were no doubt the children's things and the 'ouse linen ; cos in course the Prince and the boys 'as theirs ready made, as in gen'ral sets better than 'ome work, specially the fronts, as will ride up, even tho' you do get them ready made.

But as I were a-sayin', there's Bores all over the world, and if they would keep theirselves to theirselves, nobody would interfere with them ; and wotever old Bartle Fair were about in unnecksin' of them I can't think, as I see myself at the Cape, along with King Kickywhy, as were a-settin' in the sun on the Castle walls as 'appy as the day were long, a-eatin' raisins along with 'is four wives, as is a state of nature.

But, lor, there's no tellin' which is right and which is wrong over there, for you can't get at the truth, and some praises them black creeturs, and others says as they're reg'lar devils, as we know is always painted blacker than he is ; not as he can be if he's anythink like Old Sinful, for I never did 'ear of such a black-'earted tyrant to 'is own flesh and blood, as no doubt starved 'is wife to death and drove 'is children away, and 'ad a orfin grandchild as he 'it about that orful as I felt obliged to interfere myself over the wall when I see 'im a-draggin' of 'er round the gardin by the roots of 'er 'air, as were a-coming out by 'andfuls in spite of

'er screams, and don't know wot he'd 'ave done next if I 'adn't shied a close-prop at 'im over the palins, as cut 'im across the shin, and sent 'im back'ards into 'is own cucumber frame, and the gal got away into my place, as he swore he'd make too 'ot to 'old us, till Brown took out a warrant agin 'im, to bind 'im over to keep the piece, and we kept the gal till she got a werry nice place at the end of six months when I'd took 'er in, and tort 'er everythink, as was both ready and willin', and would 'ave kep' 'er altogether, only but for 'er demon gran'father, as did ought to 'ave been locked up, as insulted 'er out of the back winder about 'er mother, as he'd been and drove to the streets, as died in the workus when this gal were born, as ain't anythink for your own flesh and blood to throw in your face when you're a-cleanin' the steps. Ah! there's savidges all over the world, only they're kep' in check the same as Old Sinful, tho' there's many a 'ome as did ought to be under the perlice, cos tho' in course every man's 'ouse is 'is castle, yet he didn't ought to make 'is family live like slaves in a dungeon, the same as my oppersite naybours, the Mappins, as lost their poor mother, and five on 'em, as was all 'uddled together in a back kitchen, while that feller and 'is second was a-rollin' in luxuries upstairs, and nobody wouldn't 'ave knowed it, but for a gal as I knowed,

as went to 'elp and wash up, as told me as them poor dear children was fed with bits as would turn a dog's stomich, and as she were sure as one gal was in a bad way with 'er 'ip. So one night, as them two brutes 'ad went to the play, I stepped over, cos I 'adn't seen them children for three months since their mother died, as were all neglect, and 'im married agin in a fortnight, and a-givin' out as he'd sent the children to 'is mother, a lyin' willin, for never did I see sich a sight as that back kitchen, with them poor darlin's, as the eldest were only nine.

I could not 'elp sheddin' a tear, when I see them, a mask of skin and bone, on a filthy mattrass as were on the stones, as that fieldmale fiend 'ad give the gal a row in, because she washed their 'ands and faces on the sly, for me to see 'em, not as she knowed as I was a-comin'. We give 'em some tea and toast, as warmed 'em up; but as to doin' anythink more, it were not in anyone's power, as in course that man's 'ouse were 'is castle, the same as if it 'ad 'ad a helefant to guard it; but me and Brown talked it over, as went and spoke to the reliev'in' officer, as got a order for to visit the place, as found them children in that state as he sent 'em to the workus, with that beast of a man not sober in bed drinkin' gin out of a soder-water bottle, and the woman on the floor dead drunk, with the bro-

kers in the 'ouse, as was a-goin' to sell 'em up that werry day. So them poor children was got away ; but one on 'em died, and the others was took care on by their mother's relations, as is a large family theirselves, but that well brort up, as will take and divide them children among them.

I never 'eard wot become of their father, nor yet 'is wife, as no doubt is both lost in this 'ere wilder-ness of sin and sorrer, as is wot I considers London, specially the East End, where the poor 'ave been left to struggle on in orful poverty, as they've fought the battle well, and there's many a coster as can 'old up 'is 'ead and say as he never were in trouble, and 'ave worked 'ard for large families, as the mother's took 'er share along with the donkey, as is like one of the family, and will put 'is back into it in drorin' of the truck with a load of greens and broccoler, as many a 'orse would shy at, as shows as where there's a will there's a way.

But talkin' of donkeys, it's downright wonderful to think as there should be such a lot on 'em in Parlymint, as to think of shettin' up the pubs of a Sunday, as if it were a sin to drink a drop of beer or even sperrits on Sundays. It's all werry well for them great guns as they calls cannons to go on lecturin' and talkin' to poor people about their wices and gettin' drunk, as tho' nobody else did it, and as if poor people was fools or children, as I

considers great impidence, cos I'm sure there's lots of swells as wants talkin' to more than the poor, as passes their lives in idleness and wice, for I well remembers a party as 'ad only been a printer's devil when a boy, as come to make a big fortun out of a lot of swindles as he were in, but always kep' out of the clutches of the perlice, as is the arm of the law, and spent 'is money on 'isself, and doin' all the 'arm as he could lay 'is 'ands to, and were a reglar moral Ulster, a-swellin' about the place, and took and died suddin the werry middle of all 'is deborchery, as were a old man, tho' dyed and made up young, cos it's wonderful what a tailor, with constant clean linen, can do, not as they can ever make one of these 'ere upstart shams ever look like a gentleman. Well, sich a party as that did ought to be made set and 'ear a Archbishop preach by the hour together, with his feet wet thro' and werry little wittles, about shettin' up public-'ouses on Sundays, as is places as swells never sets foot in any day, no more than they'd put their 'eads into the dust-'ole.

But as Brown says, "'Ow about the clubs on a Sunday?" And I says, "If it's sinful to take a drop to drink on Sunday, then let all the wine-cellars be locked up by the perlice Saturday night, and not opened till the middle of the day Monday."

Why, I knowed a party as were rollin' in riches, as drunk 'erself to death, with nothink but the tea-

pot wisible, as she 'ad got sperrits in all the time, and kep' a-sippin' at with 'er 'ead constant in at a cupboard door, as were behind where I were a-settin', as were out in Horsetrailier, and a young woman, too, tho' bloated, as is a sinkin' into 'er grave reglar, with no happytite for anythink but a 'erring or somethink as would provoke constant thust, as put 'er 'and to 'er 'ead that often, as she fell out of 'er chair, as put 'er 'usband that out of temper as he took and give 'er a good weltin' with 'is slipper when he got 'er up to bed, as it took three on 'em to do it, for she were a full size and no legs, as the licker will fly to, and 'ers was a sight afore she died, as 'er last words on her lips was drink, as she died a-ravin' for, like a mad dog at water, when they offered it 'er, and as to a cup of tea, reglar spurned it, a-callin' of it cat-lap, as 'ad wore 'er out with dropsy a-settin' in, as touched the 'art, thro' a-mountin' up that gradgial, as 'ave been known to reach the brain, partikler in infants, where there's been drink in the famly, partikler the father and mother.

But, law, the way as people goes on about drinkin', you'd think as there wasn't nothink else 'rong done in this world but gettin' a drop too much, as in course ain't a good 'abit; but there's worse things done by them as is as sober as judges, as the sayin' is, tho' I knowed a magistrate once as

were that give to drink, as in fun they rote J. P. arter 'is name, as meant Jin Punch.

Some says as drink is the mother of all other wices, but in my opinion it's idleness as leads most parties 'rong, along with poverty and a bad life, as all comes of parties 'avin' no self-respect, as would make 'em work hard and keep themselves respectable, as is true 'Ome Rule, and not to 'ave all the gals a-wantin' to be young ladies, and give themselves hairs about bein' delicate, not as I 'olds with not lettin' a young person set down in a shop when she ain't a-servin' anyone, tho' in course they feels tired if they're out a-larkin' about with their pals the hevenin' afore, so ain't fit for work the next mornin'.

I'm sure the hairs as they put on at one shop where I bought a bit of silk, as were a remnant, as I thort I could carry the colour in my eye, as I found didn't match the other by daylight, so took it back to change it, as the young woman as served me 'ad promised as she would.

I went into the shop the next day, and says to the party at the counter as I wanted to see the young woman as 'ad served me the hevenin' afore.

So he says, "Which of you young ladies served this old person last hevenin'?"

"Oh," I says, "my lord, I'm sorry as I didn't

know wot swells you all was 'ere, as I suppose you're a duke, at the werry least."

He stares at me as I says, "Young ladies, indeed! rubbish!" As is all them sham ways as brings gals to ruin, as you may see the streets of a night full on, as the shops closes early for to accomodate, as is the reason as at one place they gives such werry low pay; and in my opinion, if young people as 'ad got to get their bread was kep' at work a little longer, it wouldn't do 'em no 'arm, tho' in course a 'olliday now and then is proper, as they'd enjoy all the more once a week than trapesin' about the streets with their pals every night; and as to Satterday 'arf-'oliday bein' give 'em for to spend the Sabbath better, that's downright rubbish, not but wot Satterday arternoon, specially in summer, is a time for to enjoy cricket and sich like, as they might be a-doin' wuss Sunday arter church, in my opinion.

But law, that ain't no busyness of mine. I spends my Sunday my way, and let others do the same; and if, on the sly, they're a carryin' on wuss games than any other day in the week, it's the faults of them as makes 'em 'ippercrits, as don't do nothink but idle about all day, and keepin' up a solemn look, and wouldn't even whistle for the world.

There ain't no laws as will ever make people either sober, nor yet 'onest nor industrious, as is

all accordin' to their principles, as is wot werry few 'ave got, and 'ardly any ever acts on any part of the world, as I've been. Like a old gent aboard of a steamer, as were talkin' to Brown, and said as he'd give up religion, as he didn't see as it made parties any better. So Brown jumped on 'is back in a minit, a-sayin', "Do you mean to say as a party wouldn't be better if he acted up to religion?"

"Yes, that's where it is," says the old gent; "them as professes it don't act up to it."

"So much the wuss for them," says Brown; "and it's jest the same as a man a-goin' about shabby and dirty, always a-sayin' to every one as he's got plenty of good clothes and clean linen put away somewheres; but as he don't never wear 'em, parties nat'rally looks on him as a dirty, shabby dog. The clothes is all right, but why talk about 'em, and not let us see 'em;" as shet that old party up, and he didn't say no more to Brown, as don't often speak up, but when he does, is down on parties that 'eavy, as a thousin' of bricks ain't nothink to 'im.

As to religion, it ain't for want of churches and chapels as parties ain't pious now-a-days, for they reglar swarms, as is werry different to when my dear mother were a gal, and 'ardly any churches anywheres out of town, and nothink 'ardly in the way of a place of wusship 'twixt Lambeth and

Croydon, except it might be a chapel-of-hease, or a meetin'-'ouse, as they did used call them Methody places, as well as the Independents, as is now only the Quakers, as goes and sets in 'em of a Sunday, and 'as a good think all about everything that eases the mind arter a 'ard week's work, and not a moment for to set quiet, and make out wot you've been makin' in the way of profits, the same as Miss Pilkinton, as went to 'ear Spurgin, and come 'ome with more patterns for bonnets than 'er 'ead could carry away with 'er.

I must say as I do feel werry thankful as my time for 'ome rulin' is over, for I'm sure if I'd a young family to bring up now-a-days I shouldn't know which way to turn; wot with young people bein' that dressy and cheeky, and never 'appy out of the streets; for tho' never one to keep young people over strict, I wouldn't never stand no nonsense, nor yet bein' cheeked when I checked 'em for their faults, and so did Brown from the werry fust, and never allowed even the little uns to take no liberties, as parties werry often larfs at in child-'ood as leads to the broomstick when too late; not but wot we've 'ad trouble with them, but nothink to be ashamed on; and tho' my eldest gal did get married on the sly, she were a wife within 'arf a 'our of leavin' 'er 'ome in a four-wheel cab, without a stain on 'er character, for Miss Pilkinton went with

'er unbeknown to me, as was a-waitin' in the cab round the corner, as were the hact of a friend, tho' pre'aps some might say she did ort to 'ave told me, but only got it out of Mary Ann in drinkin' tea the night afore, under a solemn promise as she wouldn't never diwulge it; so in course she didn't till they was man and wife, and then made 'er come and tell me, and a good 'usban' he certingly 'ave made 'er, and a steady man; not as ever I fancies 'im, nor yet Brown, as always says he's married 'er and not us, and tho' they are my own grandchildren, I never did see a better 'Ome Rule or a nicer little family, as is five, thro' 'avin' berried 'er fust, as wouldn't never 'ave 'appened if she 'adn't took and married on the sly, so as I didn't see 'er for nearly a twelvemonth, as were too late, cos wotever could she know about a hinfant, as were only jest turned twenty-one, as made 'er father so down on 'er; but that's all over, and we're all friends, as shook 'ands with Barnes afore we went away, and come down to meet us at the railway with the two eldest in comin' back, and wanted us to go and stop with them, as I knowed werry well wouldn't wash, so went to Mrs. Padwick till our own place were ready. Cos I knows my own failin's, as may be faults, and felt as if I was a-stoppin' along with my own dorter, and see anythink a-goin' rong, partikler with the children, I must pint it out, as ain't

good policy for to interfere, tho' natural, as is why young people is best left alone, and even mothers as interferes, tho' well meant, in a general way, put their foot in it, as the sayin' is.

So I always thinks of them men I've 'eard on as made large fortunes jest thro' a-mindin' their own busyness, and tries to mind mine, escept when I'm sure I can do any one a good turn, as I considers is every one's busyness, and if that were done more we shouldn't 'ave rows in Ireland, nor yet them orful Bores, as I considers as that there poor dear General Colley, tho' a nice feller, and brave as a lion, didn't ought never 'ave gone 'isself, nor yet 'ave took them others to certain death, and if they was my sons I don't think I could look over any more than Queen Wictorier, as would 'ave give 'im a-talkin' to if he'd 'ave lived to tell the tale, as is reglar madness, partikler with a wife, as did ort to 'ave took warnin' by that young Lewy Napoleon, poor dear boy, a-rushin' into danger blindfold, as he looked upon as mere play, but was soon played out thro' a-findin' of it a losin' game in the long run, partikler when that Mother Cary's chicken-'earted party took and bolted, and left 'im alone, and got safe 'ome to 'is mammy, and rote about 'is prayers, as is easier done than said, as he didn't ought to 'ave made no illusion, but 'ave kep' 'em dark, even if he 'ad to say 'em in bed, as is

better than nothink, tho' never one of my 'Ome Rules, nor yet my mother afore me, escept Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, the last thing, as 'er mother 'ad learned 'er, and run thro' the 'ole family, as is proper brortin's up in my opinion, as makes young people 'oner their father and their mother, and respect their betters, as is wot will be the ruin of Horsetrailier, there bein' no betters, as considers theirselves all equals, as it's a likely chance as the Prince of Wales would 'ave went to sich a place, partikler arter Injeer, where they overdoes their bowin' down and worshipping', cos tho' I likes to see servants keep their place, and don't 'old with no "Jack's as good as 'is master ways," yet don't like to see parties a-cringin' and a-crouchin' afore their feller-creeturs like bounded slaves; not but wot they seems born to it, so comes nat'ral to 'em, tho' in course it can't be nat'ral to no one, not even a dog to be kicked and cuffed about all over the place, as I calls cowardly ways, as is always bullies, cos they wouldn't dare to treat a helefant like that, as wouldn't be trampled on and not turn any more than a worm, as 'ave its feelin's the same as a rynoscerus, as I 'ave 'eard say is as wild as a deer, as savidge as a bull with a ring thro' 'is nose, and as swift as a 'air, as will fly like a harro over the fields, with a skin as no cannon ball couldn't never penetrate, and lives in the marshes along

with the crockerdile, as can't make a nasty snap at 'em, like the ipperpostermus, as was no doubt made for them others to live upon, tho' a werry unpleasant naybour in a swamp, as he will splash about in a-treadin' under foot 'is feller-creeturs, as ain't livin' and lettin' live; but wot there can be to live for up in them Gypshun swamps as runs all over Afriker, I can't think, as is werry un'olesome, the same as Lambeth when overflowed with the Tems Imbankment, as 'ave rooined many a poor soul in the chandlery shop line, as it's hard to see your little stock a-floatin' down the stream with your bits of furniture, as is more preshus than the Archbishop's pallis to any one as owns 'em, and 'ave got 'em agin, thro' a-squarin the brokers, and then to see 'em swep' into the riv r, as didn't ought to be let run over the banks any more than the 'Ouses of Parlymint or Westminster Bridge, as may all come to be carried away with the deluge of waters as is forced back thro' 'old London Bridge bein' pulled down the same as Temple Bar, as I reglar missed; and as to that there dragon a-standin' up there as if he'd been and swallered up the lot, I don't think as he's a horniment any more than them new Law Courts, as is like a mask of churches all throwed together in a lump, as is nearly as ugly as them Knightsbridge Barracks, as I did used to walk thro' when a gal, for a short cut across the park, as

did used used to be that wild and lonesome arter dark, as many a one 'ave got lost, a-wanderin' off the right path, with no lights to guide you, and tho' the sojers was all about, they wasn't no protection thro' not bein' the perlice on duty, not even if it were murder, as in course they looks on as a matter of busyness, ; not as I means to say as sojers is murderers, as I considers brave fellers a-doin' of their dooty, but in course don't mind the sight of bloodshed, as I do 'ope we shan't 'ave a-goin' on in Ireland, cos in course 'Ome Rule would be better than that, as might live 'appy ever arter, the same as a fairy tale, as I've 'eard say, as the Hirish believes in farees to this werry day, and so do the Scotch, for that matter, as railroads seems to 'ave drove out of English 'eads, thro' a-cuttin' up the fields as they used to dance in.

MRS. BROWN ON HOME RULE.

ME and Brown were a-settin' over the fire arter supper, and he'd been readin' to me about 'Ome Rule in Ireland, and the 'Ouse of Commons bein' obstructed, so I says, "Why ever don't they send that there Speaker over to Ireland for to rule, cos if he can rule the 'Ouse so well, why not the 'ome?" Brown only says, "Bosh!" as is a rude way as 'eve got whenever I opens my mouth, as is why I've throwed up politics arter supper, but did want to know somethink about 'Ome Rule, as I've see a deal of both at 'ome and abroad, and were a-thinkin', tho' Brown did jump down my throat, as every man did ought to rule 'is own 'ome, even tho' it may bring 'im to the workus in the hend. So why not Ireland? As I pauses for a reply, as all I got was Brown's snores, as I do not consider manners when ladies is present, and so I told 'im, as woke 'im up, and he says, "Wot is it now?"

"Why," I says, "I wants to know why every

Irishman shouldn't rule 'is own 'ome, tho' I must say as them as I've knowed 'ave been give to spilin' their children in lettin' on 'em play old gooseberry, as the sayin' is, both in the 'ouse and gardin, as was a fine family, but obstreperous as wild colts, tho' certingly good-'arted, and wouldn't 'urt a fly, tho' they did pack the cat in the fish-kettle, when they was a-movin', and tied their gran'mother into 'er chair when she was dosin' over the newspaper, as they set light to, and then 'ollered 'Fire!' as nearly caused the old lady's death, but only their fun; so why not let them rule their 'omes their own way."

Says Brown, "By all means; but not every one else's."

"Well," I says, "I certingly would be boss of my own shanty, as the 'Merrykins say, if it was only a bottle."

"Yes," says Brown; "but suppose you lives in a shanty as is somebody's else's? 'Ow then?"

"Why," I says, "I should pay my rent, tho' not preaps to the day, but within a month, and then nobody shouldn't interfere with me as could keep the brokers out, and that's all as I should care for."

"Yes," says Brown; "but suppose you wouldn't or couldn't pay, and the brokers was put in, would you take and 'ammer the broker."

I says, "In course not, nor no more wouldn't any one as consider 'erself a lady."

"Well," says Brown, "that's wot's put me out with the Hirish; they won't pay and they won't go."

I says, "Well, I've knowed 'em werry different to that, poor things, for there was poor Mrs. Grady, as good a soul as ever trod shoe-leather, and it's precious little of that as ever she 'ad to tread on, and starved 'erself to pay 'er rent, and 'ad a family to look to 'er for bread, with a 'usban' as was crippled thro' roomatics, and never a murmur, as was sold up over and over agin, poor thing, and took it all that patient, down to the washin' tub, with a candle in a bottle, as she were a-settin' on turned upside down, and 'im took to the infirmary, a-shriekin' on a stretcher, but wouldn't never go into the 'ouse 'erself, nor yet the children, and would stand at the wash-tub till she were a-droppin' for 'arf a pint to keep 'er up. I never see sich a good creetur, never, as would come 'ome dead beat from a 'eavy wash, and then set up all night with a sick naybour, as she's nussed many a one back from death's door on a flat iron, as she'd got fourpence on for to buy a bit of arrer root, and come to me for a drop of brandy, as we dropped down that poor Mrs. Goller's throat, as were a-sinkin' rapid, when she fust went in; and reared

the twins arter all, as lived on tins of that there condensed milk, as they sucked thro' a injin-rubber toob out of a bottle, as is better than any cow in my opinion, as is apt to lay too 'eavy on a child's stomick, and in course asses is out of the question, as is wot nobody but royal families is brought up on, along with the Lord Mare's hinfant, as I well remembers, and 'ad a silver cradle thro' bein' born when in hoffice, as were within the year, as ain't usual in Lord Mares, tho' certingly I have knowed it in 'igh families as was milked reglar mornin' and evenin' at their own doors, though, in my opinion, milk and water would do quite as well.

As to Mrs. Grady, she's a-thrivin' in a coal and tater business now thro' Grady's losin' the use of 'is legs, as prevents 'im a-goin' out with the truck, and is a drawback, yet thro' bein' a scholar, can keep the slate for 'er, as she'd nineteen shillin' on when 'er boy, as is called Mike, took and rubbed it all out with 'is elber, thro' it bein' left a-layin' on the counter, as he were a-'ritin' a copy on, as did ought to 'ave been 'ung up, but tho' a good soul, she never were tidy, and couldn't darn a stockin' not to 'ave saved 'er sole, as she often told me; but at 'er chapel every mornin' afore daylight, with the snow on the ground over 'er boots, tho' they was reglar lace-up ankle jacks like a milk walk.

But talkin' about 'Ome Rule, she kep 'ern in fust-

rate order, tho' too fond of the copper-stick over them boys' backs, yet for all that as fond on 'em as lambs, and they a-doatin' on 'er, and never would say 'er nay, tho' the eldest were eighteen, and not over steady neither, as I considers was thro' 'er a-makin' 'im take the pledge too young, as he broke thro' in less than a week, and in course took to drink as the ducks to the water, as is the cuss of Horsetrailier wherever you goes.

I must say as there ain't much 'Ome Rule over there, for the boys and gals is men and women afore their time, and that cheeky to their parints, as I'd never 'ave stood if I'd 'ave flogged 'em as long as I stood over 'em, not as I 'olds with keepin' of young people, as if they was children all their lives. In course in goin' about the world so much, I've seen a good deal ; but for family ways give me Old England for ever with all its faults, tho' I've knowed how-dashus young people as 'ave set light to their fathers and mothers, and called their gran'pa a old fool, not as they was so werry rong over that, for he married 'is 'ousemaid, as was fifty years older than 'er, so in course they were right, tho' they didn't ought to 'ave said so afore 'im, not as it did that impident minx no good, for he died without makin' a new will, and as he'd made all 'is property over to 'is dorter, she only got a guinea a week arter 'is death, as did ought to 'ave kep her decent, not

as 'is dorter ever see 'er, escept it were from 'er fust-floor front, as was a-'ammerin' in lickier at the gardin gate, and took to the station-'ouse on a stretcher the day as the poor old man were berried without a dry eye in the church.

If parties wants to 'ave 'Ome Rule they must rule theirselves proper, and not do as old Mullins did, and marry the sister of 'is eldest son's wife, and the same day, tho' one were the church and the other the register office, as didn't turn out well, not as she did ought to 'ave told 'im at 'is own table as she'd dance over 'is grave, as ain't decent conduct in a widder in a churchyard, partikler with a family wault and railin's, as might be overlooked in a simmetry, as isn't like consecrated ground, tho' in general kept werry neat, tho' I considers as some of them tombstones is werry fantasticle, specially in Horsetrailier, where there ain't sich a thing as a old churchyard, nor yet a church wisible, 'cos I see the oldest as was the fust as ever was built, as is the Scotch persuashon, and only sixty years ago. I must say in speakin' of Horsetrailier, as it certainly were a heffort to get there, as is thro' bein' all them miles from England, but for all that always were the largest highland in the world afore it were discovered, as is Queen Wictorier's dominions, as the sun never sets on night nor day, as you may tell by the 'eat as comes in about Christ-

mas, and would be horful work for the butchers and poulterers in London.

Not as it matter to the Horsetrailians as always 'as their beef and puddin' cold at Christmas, and often goes out for a picnic, as don't seem to come nat'ral like your own 'ome.

Not as I objects to a bit of cold plum-pudding myself, tho' apt to lay 'eavy with some without a drop of somethink 'ot on the top on it, as they says will settle your love by your own fireside, as opens the 'art to feel for another, partikler sich weather as we've jest 'ad, as is enuf to freeze up your werry marrer bones in your skins, as is jest like my luck to 'ave jest come in for.

'Cos you may say as you like, Horsetrailier certainly is the place for sunshine from one end to the other, as is why the sun never sets on it, thro' bein' that size as no one sun couldn't never get over it in one day, if they didn't cut off the twilight, so as not to 'ave one a-risin' jest as the other were a-settin'

Not as I knowed much about it till I 'eard a party on board the steamer a-explainin' all them 'evanly bodies, as told us all them stars 'ad been suns theirselves in their times, so suppose it's them and not the old moons as is cut up to make stars. I can't say as I could make much on it, 'cos when parties begins to talk about millions of miles, even

of sheep, my 'ead gets all of a whirl, and I do 'ope as they'll never bring railways to go that pace, for I'm sure my 'ead won't never stand the wear and tear, partikler a-settin' with my face to the injen, for as I were a-comin' up from Dover, and thro' jest a-puttin' my 'ead out for to 'ave a look a-goin' thro' Rochester, my bonnet were swep' off, hair and all, and it's lucky as I 'ad my wail tied under my chin, or I should 'ave got to London Bridge as bald as ever I was born.

It's wonderful to think as we should start off from Coborn Road one way and go all that way round the world and come back to the werry door, jest as we started from in a four wheeler, and not seem to 'ave been gone no time, as proves the world is round, tho' it was a year and a-arf, as is like a dream, with our street not much altered, except a new lamp-post at the hend, with the postman obliged to be penshuned off with roomatics, and the turncock married agin, as shows wot a world it is for change, tho' all the same a 'undred years 'ence, as the sayin' is; not but wot my 'ome were changed, and all for the wuss, as there 'adn't been no rules nor yet reg'lotion, and the sight on it nearly broke my 'art, and don't think as I should 'ave slep' a-wink that night, tho' Mrs. Padwick's is a feather bed, if I 'adn't sobbed myself off, when I thought wot a mess things was in at 'ome. For no

sooner 'ad we got in at the door and Brown give a glance round, than he says, "You can't stop 'ere, old lady, or roomatics is your potion." So a-feelin' he was right, off we went at once to Mrs. Padwick's, as 'ave give up the Marble Harch hend of the town to live along with her widder dorter, as 'ave took to lettin' lodgin's to captings at Poplar, and a nice 'ouse it is, and glad to see us, and fully expected, thro' 'avin' rote us a letter as were a-waitin' for us, and sayin' there was lots of room.

In course Brown and me wouldn't 'ear of any-think but takin' the first floor, as we preferred to parlours, thro' not a-likin' a bedroom on the ground-floor as is so draughty every time as the door is opened, and pecks of dust over everythink. So we stopped over three weeks and was werry comfortable thro' me a-takin' of the 'ouse-keepin' in my own 'ands, as ain't Mrs. Padwick's strong pint, tho' you may eat off the boards where she lives, and as to 'er dorter, she's a reglar peggy dawdle, but good enuf for captings, as don't take no meals at 'ome, but breakfast with their boots cleaned.

It did my 'art good to see Brown 'ave 'is fust steak, as I cooked myself to a-turn, and saw the butcher cut a nice pint with my own eyes.

It was a change from that colonial stuff, as they don't know how to cut or cook, and sends it up a-swimmin' in grease.

In course they don't know 'ow to live beyond a public-'ouse, not with all their blowin' about their meat, tho' certingly I 'ave 'ad a bit of decent beef now and then, but as to mutton it all runs to wool, and they looks on the meat as offal, and sells a 'ole leg of mutton for a shillin', as I've see myself in the streets of New Zealin.

There's no place like 'ome, as the sayin' is, but I'm sure when fust I see my 'ome it wasn't like no place as ever I lived in, as were all my own fault for not lockin' it up; not as I'm sorry I went as were my dooty to Brown, as would 'ave went without me, and never p'raps 'ave seen 'im no more.

I'm thankful as we're back and jest in time for to meet them lawyers over Brown's great aunt's bit of property, as 'ave fell in thro' the underground railway a passin' that way close agin Saffron 'Ill, as did used to be a reglar rookery all the way to Clerkenwell Green by Cow Cross, as my grandmother remembered a countryfied part, and that quiet as were close agin Coldbath Fields long afore the prison were built thro' bein' born in the Bagnige Wells Road, as was public gardins where parties did used to go take tea, and 'ear the orgin played of a Sunday evenin', as was put down thro' the Methodists as 'ad a chapel in Spa Fields, as was Lady Untinden's connexion, as my grandmother couldn't never a-bear the name on thro' 'oldin' to 'er church,

and always read the 'ole dooty of man of a Sunday, in stoppin' at 'ome when it was cos of 'er roomatics, and died at ninety-four, arter being bed-ridden seven year, and didn't marry till she was forty, and only stepmother to my dear mother, as was by 'is second. So in course the old lady could remember a deal for she's been dead jest on fifty years, as 'ad me about 'er to the last.

So now thro' that bein' settled, Brown and me is well before the world, thro' my bit of property bein' over two 'underd.

Not as we're a-goin' to turn swells, nor yet encourage our children in no idle way, as is all doin' well, so, as I says to Brown, let well alone, as the sayin' is.

We're a-goin' back to our own old house, as can't be papered and done up till spring, and then we might like to get a little way out. Not as I cares for your simmy-ditached willers, nor yet anythink like that, and as for a solintary 'ouse, I wouldn't 'ave it for the world, as is a reglar bait for burglars.

I says to Brown, the werry fust night as we got into our own place, "I do wish as I could find a good 'Ome Ruler, for I'm sure I shan't never be able to get things straight without one, for there's not a blind as will pull up and down easy, and the doors don't shet close, nor yet the winders, and the

ball-cock don't act right, and the biler won't fill itself, as will go off like a Woolich Infant if not kep' filled by 'and, as I can't espect a gal to think on, when I'm sure to forget it myself; and altogether, I don't believe as Gladstin, with all his cleverness, could set things to rights, not to my way."

He says, "They'll work right enuf, if you'll take 'em as they comes, and not be a-fumin' and a-fidgettin'."

"Ah!" I says, "that's all the thanks as I gets for slavin' my 'art out to make you a comfortable 'ome, as 'ad better turn 'Ome Ruler yourself, for I'm sure I've laid my 'ead on my piller with a 'eavy 'art, many a time a-tryin' to do, like Lady Jane Grey on the block, as said in mountin' of the scaffoldin', 'Burn fust this wicked 'and of mine,' as 'ad signed the death-warrant for to chop off Queen Lizzybeth's 'ead, and would 'ave done it, too, if 'er father 'adn't diéd in the night, as shows as everythink 'appens for the best in this world."

He says, "'Old on, Martha. Wherever you gets your 'istory from I can't think, as is all confusion, like mixed pickles."

I says, "I 'eard a party a-givin' lectures on Queen Lizzybeth over in Sydney."

He says, "No lecturer never talked that rubbish, I'm sure."

I says, "Well, I can't swear to the werry words,

in course, but that's wot I understood 'im to say, tho' I were sleepy thro' bein' arter a 'eavy tea, as is a thing I 'ates; and no doubt, if wrong, he knowed no better, cos 'ow should colonials know anythink about Queen Lizzybeth, as wasn't invented till long arter 'er time, and 'adn't no right to the crown, tho' she were the Virgin Queen; but I never asked no questions about who were executed over there, cos executions is ticklish ground with them, as 'ave been a many on 'em werry nigh transportation."

Them Horsetrailians is werry singler in their ways, and seems to think as everybody over in England is a-talkin' about them, as made me say to Mrs. Maltby, as we was a-livin' along with, "Why, bless your 'art, there ain't 'ardly anybody in London as knows as you exists, thro' bein' all too busy to give you a thought, partikler now as no convicts ain't sent 'ere."

She flew out in a reglar rage, a-sayin' as I'd throwed convicts in 'er face, and reglar took on.

So I says, "My good soul, you must be touchy to go on like that, as am aware as you ain't no convict, nor yet your parints afore you," cos I'd knowed 'em all over in England.

She didn't say nothink more, and I were sorry arterwards as I'd spoke, when I found out as 'er 'usban's family was old identities, as they calls 'em, as 'ad been lagged years afore, and no doubt did

ought to 'ave been 'ung, as it is 'ard on Horsetrailier as a many more wasn't.

Not as all on 'em takes on like that over bein' convicts, for some don't care, and I see a party as 'ad been one, and got away without no ticket, as was a 'oldin' 'is 'ead as 'igh as anybody, and kep' a theayter, and lived like a fightin'-cock at a 'otel, and was a-eatin' of 'is soup with a silver spoon as they trusted 'im with, jest as if he'd never been in trouble, but a gentleman born and bred, and no-think but a burglar, arter all. So while we was a-talkin' about all manner one thing arter another, I says, "Brown," I says, "wot is a perfeshunal beauty?"

"Why," he says, "any one who gets on in 'er perfeshun thro' bein' a beauty."

"Ah," I says, "like Madam Westris, as were inamilled afore the fire for 'ours every day, and durstn't eat or drink, and 'ad the finest leg as ever were wisible to the naked eye, as crowds went to look at night arter night, and might 'ave died a duchess if she 'adn't loved another."

"Ah!" says Brown.

So I says, "Yes, she were quite the lady, and not like these 'ere poor things as they calls Pollies, Tillies, and Totties, as, poor things, ain't got no more clothes to their backs but wot belongs to the theayter, as is as scanty as them denuded black

creeturs over in Injy, as don't show so much thro' bein' black.

I don't think as I should 'ave give perfeshunal beauties a thought, if it 'adn't been as they was brort under my notice, thro' Miss Pilkinton a-bringin' on 'em up in talkin' of 'er friends, as was considered tip-toppers, in the name of Lodin, as was parties as I knowed, but never 'adn't no idea as they was a-settin' up for perfeshunals in the beauty line, as I must say 'adn't much stock in trade to start with. So I says, "Wot foolishness, to be sure, for them to think theirselves beauties!"

"Oh," says Miss Pilkinton, "there's many a gal's face as is 'er fortune, as the sayin' is, and these 'ere perfeshunal beauties, as rose from nobodies to be quite 'igh life, is quite the rage."

I says, "Much good may it do 'em;" and nothink more wasn't said, cos I will not incourage Miss Pilkinton's rubbish, as thinks as every man as looks at 'er is fallin' in love with 'er, as is a game as she've been a-carryin' on over thirty years, to my certain knowledge, and were always plain.

As to these perfeshunal beauties, why, in course, I'd 'eard speak on 'em afore ever we went away, as is like a dream, and were asked over and over agin in Horsetrailier wot they was like, as, not a-knowin', I could not say, thro' never 'avin' seen 'em in the flesh, as the sayin' is, tho' often 'eard as their fottygrafts

was in the shop winders, as didn't make 'em out that lovely as to drive everybody mad arter 'em, and some a-sendin' of 'em presents, with dimons and dresses all over the place.

In Melbung, when we got there, every one said as these 'ere perfeshunal beauties as was a-comin' out with the Princess of Wales and all the royal family for to see their Exybishun, as would be the finest sight as ever were seen as even Queen Wictorier 'erself took a pride in, and were arf a mind to 'ave come and see with 'er own eyes, only but for Princess Beetriss bein' that orful bad sailor, as it's a mussy she were not born a boy and brort up to the sea, as might 'ave been 'er death.

Some said as Queen Wictorier 'erself were a-comin' alone with 'er royal grandsons to guard 'er. "Well," I says, "I shall believe that when I sees it, cos," I says, "it would take 'er six months and more to do the lot, and wotever would become of Osbin or Balmoril, let alone Winsor, and everythink with 'er back turned, and no one to leave for a 'Ome Ruler, I'm sure if she takes my advice she'll never go there, for if I could 'ave believed the rack and ruin as my 'ome would 'ave come to when away, I'd never 'ave left my 'ome without a ruler. I thought as I could 'ave trusted Mrs. Challin, for tho' 'ard of 'earin', 'er morils is good; so let 'er 'ave the kitchens to live in, never a-dreamin' as she'd

take in washin', and swill the place with soap suds back and front, with the gardin cut up to ribbins thro' 'er pattins, and the wall broke down at the top, all thro' 'er a-'angin' out them 'eavy things.

It's all werry well for 'er to talk about the winter bein' that severe, as made the snow come in at the roof, thro' the gutters bein' stopped, as might 'appen anywhere, as is true, cos in course there must be floods in Winsor Castle itself if there wasn't gutters for the water to run off, as no doubt Queen Wictorier's like me, 'as ketched in butts, thro' bein' soft for 'er royal 'ands, as I 'ope don't 'ave chaps like mine, as is like bleedin' nugmet graters, tho', as for that, if I'd 'ave knowed as things was a-goin' to turn out with weather like this, I do not think as I'd 'ave come 'ome at any rate till the frost was broke.

Here 'ave I been back nearly three weeks, with the drains up and chimbleys smokin' back and front all the time, as ain't 'ad a sight of the sweeps since I've been gone, tho' I left Mrs. Challin the money, cos no doubt Queen Wictorier would do, as well as the cat's meat and milk, as I allowed a apenny a day for. But when the cat's away the mice will play, as the sayin' is, not as our cat played, poor thing, for she was 'arf starved.

In course if Queen Wictorier were to go to Horse-

trailier she'd send one of them Gov'nor Generals over 'ere for to be 'Ome Rulers, as could keep order, as might be the Dook of Cambridge, as would keep Gladstin and them other 'Ome Rulers in their places, and not let that there Bradlore give 'im none of 'is cheek, a-wantin' to take away parties' penshuns, like old Mrs. Grunsill, as 'ave three-and-sixpence a week to this day, through her own gran'father's gran'-mother 'avin' been clear starcher to Queen Charlotte, as run in the family, for 'er gran'mother did used to get up for the actors like Queen Lizzybeth, ruffs as took three weeks starchin' alone, but wore no doubt a wonderful time, thro' not 'avin' them fogs to make everythink like chimbley sweeps ; as it wouldn't be worth while for parties as lives in now-a-days to try clear-starchin', nor yet even washin' their linen, I 'ave 'eard of one Duchess as tho' she were a orful swell, as made 'er dorters stand at the wash-tub till they was ready to drop, so as they might know how to get up their fine things so as not to run short, if there should be a strike among the washin' woinin.

I do 'ope as if Queen Wictorier should go, she won't be as foolish as me, a-lettin' Gladstin live in Winsor Castle while she's gone, like Mrs. Challin in our kitchen, for my 'ouse is reglar undermined with soap-suds, and no doubt, like Challin, he'd smoke 'is pipe in the best rooms, as tho' it don't

cling to the curtains like a cigar, is werry unpleasant arter bein' shut up.

I do think as I must penshun Mrs. Challin off, for tho' no 'arm in 'er, she's terrible 'ard of 'earin', and 'ave got a trifle of 'er own, so that a shillin' or eighteenpence a week would be a 'elpin' 'and, and no doubt like Gladstin and Bradlore, as 'ave 'both put some things away agin a rainy day, as is takin' of time by the firelock, as the sayin' is.

In course there's penshuns and penshuns, as the sayin' is, but I do 'ope as they won't be a-cuttin' 'em all off, as will be 'ard on many a poor soul, as arf-a-crown a week keeps out of the workus.

But talkin' of perfeshunal beauties I must say as I were taken aback the fust time as Miss Pilkinton come over to see me, as I didn't 'ardly know 'er in a 'at, and a flaxin wig, and a perpetial blind boil on 'er nose, as 'ad quite changed the shape on it. I didn't say a word cos she'd got on one of them tight fittin' shape welweteen dresses, as don't set well on anyone as 'ave got one 'ip 'igher than the other, with your oppersite blade-bone stickin' out of the square.

She were that pleased for to see me agin as she quite 'ugged me, a-sayin' as I looked twenty year younger, as it were, all thro' me 'avin' took to light 'air.

I says, "It's the only one I got, or I should not

'ave put it on, for wot with the sun and sea-water, it were washed nearly white."

She says, "Oh! do always wear it, it's that becomin' to you, besides bein' all the rage, thro' all them perfeshunal beauties a-wearin' of it that colour."

I says, "Oh! indeed. Where do they live?"

"Oh!" she says, "nowheres partikler, but you may see 'em every mornin' a-walkin' in the park, and I've 'eard say as thro' doin' of it parties 'ave ketched the heye of H.R.H., and got persented by him at Court, and considers theirselves quite nobility."

I says, "Who's H.R.H.?"

She says, "Why, the Prince of Wales, of course."

"Well," I says, "he certingly is a good judge of beauty, as you can tell by lookin' at that sweet Princess of his'n, as is a ornymment."

"Oh! yes, she's all werry well," says Miss Pilkinton, "but ain't got no form; and I've been told as she wants conversation, as is 'arf the battle with our sects, as is well beknown."

"Well," I says, "to my eye, she's got both face and form, and as to wantin' conversation, she can get lots of that, I should think."

"She ain't not one of them rattlin' talkers," says Miss Pilkinton, "as carries all afore 'em."

I says, "So much the better for H.R.H."

She says "Martha, dear, I can't take my eyes off you, as don't look thirty."

I says, "Go along with your rubbish," for I knowed wot she were up to, a-wantin' to draw me out for to say as she looked younger 'erself, as I wouldn't 'ave the black-artedness to tell sich a-wicked false'ood for the world.

So at last she says, "How do you think I look?"

"Well," I says, "pretty well considerin' your age. You ain't much changed except the colour of your 'air, as I thought would 'ave got grey, cos it were a-turnin' afore we left."

"Ah!" she says, "my 'ead-aches got that bad last winter as I 'ad my 'ead shaved, and went in for the unwisible perukes, as they makes up for to make you look eighteen."

"Well," I says, "my dear soul, I do 'ope as you ain't paid for one of them, cos if you 'as, it's a dead robbery, for that 'ead of 'air as you've got on 'ave aged you on the 'ole, I should say."

She says to me quite short, "You're the fust as 'ave found out that, but I see wot it is, you've been so long among them colonials, as you forgot your West End ways."

"Well," I says, "there's colonial, as is a rough lot; but there's some on 'em as big fools out there as you'll find at 'ome, full of their 'airs and rubbish."

“Ah!” she says, “I suppose they was all imitatin’ us in dress, in the ’ope as if the Prince of Wales did go out he’d find ’isself at ’ome for beauty.”

“Well,” I says, “they blows a great deal about their beauty, as I couldn’t see myself, tho’ some says is all a-owin’ to the young gals out there a-eatin’ sich lots of hanimal food; and I must say if beef and beauty goes together, there’s lots of one, and them Horsetrailians did ought to be lovely, for I considers as they gorges, as never will believe as anybody but a navvy requires beefsteak and onions for breakfast, nor yet ’ot meat meals three times a day.” I must say as the sight of Miss Pilkinton did put me out for she’d got this beast of a front on, and ’ad been and floured ’er face, as I must say did make me sick with puttin’ on sich hairs and graces, and a-gigglin’ and a-goin’ on like a gal jest out of school, and a-tellin’ me about them parties as set up for beauties was married women, and not bein’ so very young neither, as wasn’t rich nor yet their ’usban’s, and yet was a-doin’ the swell, a-goin’ to Court in dimons and feathers, and ridin’ in their carridges, as others kep’ for ’em, and goin’ on as if they was real swells.

“Well,” I says, “for my part, I’d rather be a decent mother of a family, and doin’ dooty that way, than be a-filanderin’ about your Rotten Rows,

a-danglin' arter princes, as I considers bold ways, and must hend bad, cos it's all werry well for these perfeshunal beauties now, while it lasts; but they did ought to remember as they don't grow younger, and as the day will soon come as they'll go out of fashion, thro' bein' wot the French calls passy, and then who'll think anything of 'em, as pride must 'ave a fall, and they'll all come croppers."

As to Miss Pilkinton, she always were a fool about the men, and is now a-tryin' to ketch a chemist and druggist, and thinks as she'll make 'im jealous, a-walkin' in the park among the swells in the mornin' when he's got to stick to 'is shop, not in my opinion as he means anythink serous, as remembers 'im well bein' assistant to a shop up agin the Marble Harch, as were called in one arternoon when Mrs. Grady's child, as did used to go out charin', nearly scalded 'erself to death thro' a-drinkin' out of the spout of the kittle, when 'er mother's back were turned, as 'ad been left on the 'ob jest on the bile. In course it didn't matter Miss Pilkinton bein' a fool, but wot did put me out were 'er turnin' the 'eads of them Lodin gals, as did used to 'elp their mother in the lettin' line, till Miss Pilkinton begun a-talkin' about their beauty, as were all a fiction, tho' good 'eads of 'air and nice complexshuns. I see them gals dressed quite neat that time as I met 'em at tea, jest afore we left for

Horsetrailier, and did stare when they come to see me the other day that dressed, and 'adn't no consumption as they'd been a-comin' out as perfeshunal beauties, and spent all their mornin's and arternoons in the park, and 'adn't no idea as they 'ad give up the two young men as they was engaged to, as one were a pawnbroker in Bermondsey, and the other in the ile and colour line, near the Old Kent Road, both a-doin' well, and as steady as Old Time, as the sayin' is.

I never shan't forget Miss Pilkinton when fust I asked arter them, a-tellin' me they was a-movin' in the fust circles, and was a-goin' to be presented at Court, thro' their father being a hoffer, and their mother a clergyman's dorter.

I says, "Rubbish about officer; why, he was only a colour-sarjint, and as to 'er father bein' a clergyman, he were a itinerant, as the Methodys calls them men as goes about a-cadgin' and a-preachin' all over the place. So," I says, "when they goes to Court I'll go with 'em, if it's only to 'old their trains."

"Oh!" she says, "you needn't jeer, for one on 'em 'ave 'ad a offer, as would keep 'er bro'om, let alone 'er oprer box, and dimon' car-tops, as 'ave got a title a-'angin' to 'is name."

"Well," I says, "I should like to see 'er so sitiuated for 'er mother's sake, as is a hard-workin'

woman; but," I says, "let 'er look out for 'er marriage lines, as she'll 'ave to show afore goin' to Court, cos Queen Wictorier's that partikler over them pints."

"Oh!" she says, "she's a-goin' to be invited to the Prince of Wales's gardin party, and might 'ave met Qucen Wictorier there last season, only 'er sister were took ill."

I says, "I don't know nothink about the Prince of Wales, nor yet 'is parties; but I should say he were 'ard up for company if he's got to go to Camdin Town for it."

In course I knowed as Miss Pilkinton were only a-stuffin' me up with lies, a-thinkin' thro' me a-bein' so many miles away, as I didn't know wot 'ad been goin' on, a-forgettin' as I see the papers, tho' they was sometimes two months old, and Brown and me 'ad a larf cver parties as was 'oldin' their 'eads werry 'igh out in Horsetrailier, as we know'd over in England, when in service. I shan't never forget one party in partikler, as Brown told me as 'e'd got benighted, and 'is good lady, she were my lady as I've often stood next at the washtub when a gal.

I shan't never forget the colour as she turned when she met me in the Exybishun at Melbung, dressed in green satin and a pink shawl. Not as I were a-goin' to speak to 'er, only 'er 'usban', as

ain't a bad sort, when he met Brown and shook 'ands with 'im unbeknown to my lady, as 'ad turned away, and come full butt all alone on me. So I waits for 'er to speak fust, 'cos in course she's a lady as I were not a-goin' to make up to, for it so 'appened as I cort sight on 'er when she fust see us a-comin' and give a drag at 'er 'usban's arm to get 'im away, and when she see 'im shake 'ands with Brown she turned to look at somethink the other side.

So I says, "I do 'ope as I shan't never be rich if it makes me turn my back on a old friend and naybour," for she did used to be a good sort and jolly enuf, tho' werry poor. So I walked away with Brown, but we didn't neither of us say a word, tho', in course, we both felt it thro' 'avin been their friends, as is like relations, a-livin' next door to one another; and the times as I've set up with that woman—but never mind. So I says to Brown,—
"Could you 'ave believed it as she'd pass me by?"

"Believe it!" he says, "why not? She don't want nothink of you nor yet nobody else now. Why, he's made a fortin in both wool and wheat."

"Well," I says, "much good may 'is wool and wheat do 'im, as don't look as jolly as when we did used to club together for a sprat supper, and they did used to go out with us of a Sunday to Gravesend when she did used to be fit company for such as me,

and only 'opes as she'll never 'ave to borry a bit of tea and sugar as she had done often of me, nor be glad of my left-off baby linen." So Brown he stopped for a minnit, and on I walks with a sigh, a-thinkin' as it's a 'ard world. I 'adn't got far when I 'eard someone comin' a-patterin' behind me a-sayin', "Mrs. Brown, pray, stop." I turns and sees my lady a-comin' arter me, as 'eld out both 'er 'ands, and says, "Do pray forgive me? I am so sorry as I've 'urt your feelin's, indeed I am."

I says, "There's no more occasions for your sorrers than mine." I says, "I takes your 'and, and asks you to forgive me for ever a-thinkin' of them past trifles, only I lost my temper. So you've got to forgive me, 'cos," I says, "favours as you thinks on even without a-remindin' people on, is more than returned."

She says, "I shan't be satisfied till you come to my place and reglar makes it up;" she says, "I do think as good fortune have turned my 'ead; but do come home with us to show you forgives me."

I says, "We're a-goin on to 'Addlehead to-morrow, me and Brown."

She says, "Not if we can stop you! Ah!" she says, "here is my old friend Mr. Brown a-walkin' with my 'usban' "

And there they was sure enuf, and we did go home with them and stayed two days, as 'ad friends

to meet us, and among 'em reglar swell parties as she'd interduced me to in the Exybishun.

I'm glad as we made it up, not as I wanted Sir Peter to drink my 'ealth and say as I'd been one of their best friends and give 'em many a meal when they didn't know where to turn for one. As to 'er she went on about old times afore 'er fine friends in a lovely drorin'-room as were amber satting and lace curtains with bran new furniture, and picters with gold frames all over the walls, but I don't think as they were altogether 'appy, as 'ad lost their children, as made 'er burst into tears arter tea in talkin' over the boy as she berried when we was next door neighbours in the Bow Road, and I must say as I do remember the time well, poor thing, as that boy never were strong, not from 'is birth. And she's 'ad a 'ard time of it when she come out to Horsetrailier, with three on 'er 'ands and one under the month, tho' he always were a good 'usban', and Brown said he was sure he would prosper thro' bein' steady and never spendin' a shillin' away from 'is 'ome, as is why he never took to drink in Horsetrailier, as is the cuss of the country and town too for that matter.

I must say as we 'ad a pleasant evenin' and a good cry while I were a-puttin' on my bonnet, as she couldn't get Tommy out of 'er 'ead, so we parted friends, as is well, for I'm sure I didn't bear no malice in my 'art, and in course when you've

got up in the world there's a many as don't care to be reminded of when they 'adn't a shoe to their foot. I'm quite sure of one thing, as is parties as 'ave been always used to things 'omely and plain don't care to 'ave no show nor finery, as is why Brown and me never means to alter our ways in livin', as we 'ad a reg'lar sickenin' on in seein' parties a-doin' in Horsetrailier, and see a party as 'ad been brort up a butcher, and come to be that rich as they 'ad a blue sattin bed, and couldn't never bear to sleep in it for fear of silin' it, and all the fine furniture done up in paper, as ain't my notions of a 'appy 'Ome Rule, nor yet peace of mind, as no furniture in this world can't never give, cos, if so, the Tottinem Court Road would be a reg'lar Parrydise.

But, as I were a-sayin', someone must be ruler, whether it's at 'ome or abroad, and them as rules their own 'omes best is most likely to be good rulers everywhere.

No doubt, there's plenty of 'appy 'omes and good rulers over in Ireland, tho' I must say as I do not think as them parties can be werry pleasant at 'ome, as made all that row the other night in Parlymint, a-keepin' 'em all out of their beds all night, and poor Mrs. Gladstin a-comin' down 'erself with a warmin-pan and basin of gruel, as is hings as William Ewitt never can sleep without,

let alone a turn-up bed behind the Speaker's chair.

No doubt Queen Wictorier were in a nice way when she 'eard of their goin's-on, as ain't respectable, and wouldn't be allowed in any other public 'ouse in London, till the Speaker he got that riled as he took and turned 'em all out neck and crop, as the sayin' is.

Not but wot some of them landlords is no doubt over sharp, as is no reason as they should be shot like dry rubbish all over the place, as ain't allowed to be done nowheres, except in certing spots where it's 'rote up, as I've see myself, but never meant landlords in this world, as in course 'as their rights like other people, the same as their feelin's.

But wot puts me out is them Merrykins a-incouragin' them, as wants to kick up rows in Ireland, as ain't no busyness of theirs, as 'ave got their own work cut out, and might as well put down them Mormin wretches, and leave the Injuns alone, as they're always a-plunderin' and a-murderin', as if there wasn't room enuf for 'em all.

But wot I looks at is them fellers as makes a livin' out of the Hirish by a-perswadin' of 'em as they did ought to 'ave Ireland all to theirselves cos their fathers 'ad it.

Why, Brown might as well claim the 'Obun Wireduck cos 'is grandfather's mother 'ad property

in them parts, as was well beknown, tho' could not be proved, all thro' 'is widder a-lightin' of the fire with 'is father's will, as 'ad got all their births in it, as they couldn't find the registers on, tho' they advertised for all the parish clerks in town, and offerin' five pounds reward, as would 'ave brort in thousins, the same as that street in Melbung as a sailor in a drunken spree bort the best part on for a pound or two, and come back arter thirty years and claimed the lot, as might 'ave 'ad the Town 'All, only they choked 'im off some'ow, but not afore he'd got lots of money; and preaps 'is gran'children may turn up some day and claim 'arf the town as 'ave sprung up like a musherroom; as is the same all over them colonies, as I never fancies myself for to put money into nothink out there, cos tho' it's land, and can't be made away with, yet might be swallowed up in hearthquakes, as is that common in some parts, as they thinks nothink of goin' to bed in full 'ealth and wakin' up with your 'ouse and gardin on the top of you, as might be your little all; and then where are you? As it's all werry fine to say as it's a heffort of nature, as is always that pleasant, the same as them hoperations as don't always turn out well, as were 'ow poor Sarah Spilsby come to grief over 'avin' of 'er sinews cut for a squint as she were born with, tho' some 'ave been knowed to come on with a fall, as

would 'ave been a perfect cure, only the doctor in 'is 'urry cut it the 'rong way, so as he made 'er squint the other, as was wuss than ever, as wasn't no pain, tho' a dreadful heyesore, as in course won't be no consequence if she should get a blind 'usban', the same as Mrs. Mudge's dorter, as were married to a blind beggar; not as they knowed it at the time, thro' 'im a-keepin' of 'is busyness dark, as went out early hevery mornin', and 'ad a room near the Seven Dials as he changed 'is clothes at, and kep' a dog as he'd fed on the best of heverythink, as 'ad more senses in 'is tail than most on us 'as got in their 'eads, and did used to set on a door-step at the West End, with a little tin in his mouth for to take the pennies as come in by the 'andful, and kep' 'er like a lady over in the Kent Road, and only found out thro' the dog, as did used to go 'ome with 'im for to spend Sunday, a-jumpin' all over 'er as she were a-passin' that door-step in goin' with friends to Madame Tussor's, as fainted dead away with 'orror on the pavement when she see as it were 'er own flesh and blood a-settin' there a-beggin', tho' she 'ad the presence of mind for to 'old her tung till he come 'ome in the evenin', and then give it 'im 'ot; as is 'ow they come to hemigrate with the money as he'd saved, for she wowed as she wouldn't never let 'erself down again like that at the sight of 'im beggin'; so, when I see 'er in Horse-

trailer, 'ad set up in the dressmakin' line, tho' in course she couldn't espect much work among them denuded savidges, but got a 'ome thro' 'im a-bein' that clever at mats and baskets as he'd learnt in the Indignant Blind 'Sylum as he was brort up in, and so did well, as I 'ope to see em agin, if ever we gets back to Horsetrailer.

I must say as Horsetrailer is wonderful, when you comes to consider as it's been all lifted up out of the sea thro' perpetial hearthquakes, as give me a turn to 'ear about; the 'ouses and churches in some places bein' all built of wood, tho' you wouldn't never believe it to look at 'em outside at Wellin'ton, with some on 'em as 'igh as if they was stone, partikler the buildin's as they calls Govermint, not as the gov'nor and 'is good lady lives there thro' 'avin' of a willer of their own, in course, thro' bein' Queen Wictorier's representatives, with the National Anthem played wherever they goes, and lookin' like a royal family, as shows as ladies and gentlemen is ladies and gentlemen, whether they've crowns to their 'eads or not, and no doubt much 'appier, for, as the man says in the play, "Uneasy is the 'ead as wears a crown," as no doubt is true, cos you can't lay your 'ead on your piller comfortable without your nightcap if used to one, as Brown never was thro' me 'avin' a 'orrer of seein' a man in a nightcap ever arter I see a man brought

out to be 'anged in one when quite a child, as I believe were Mr. Fontliroy, thro' a aunt of mine a-washin' for 'im, as come to be 'ung for forgery, along with Dr. Dodd, and a many more, as did used to be death in them days, as were a disgrace to the country, as old King George never would do away with, no more than the Catholics, as he couldn't a-bear the name on, as Mrs. Flannigan did used to say, thro' 'avin' got their rights. But as I were a-sayin', them hearthquakes give me a orful turn, as I see that one myself as 'appened over at Lisbon, as they brought to London and showed it at the Collyseum in the Regency Park, as is all built over now, as the back on were in Albany Street, close agin them barricks, where the 'Orse Guards is kep', as is fine fellers. Certainly Wellin'ton is as noble a port as any in a storm, thro' bein' shet in by 'ills, and when the wind do blow it's 'old on to a post is the word, if you don't wish to be took off your legs in a jiffey, as might be carried over the 'ills and far away, as the sayin' is, partikler with your umbreller up, as in course you would stick to nat'rally, partikler in a shower, not as the rain in Wellin'ton is anythink but bucketsful, as drenches you like a cow afore you knows where you are, and might wash you into the sea but for bein' up on the 'ills, as in course is a shelter agin water, tho' esposed to the wind, as they've put up posts for you to 'old on by.

But as I were a-sayin' to Mrs. Padwick, in talkin' of 'Ome Rule, "Wotever do the Hirish want?"

She says, "Nobody don't know, and some says they don't know theirselves."

I says, "They certainly did not know theirselves the other night for to make sich a bobbery as they 'ad to be took and turned out of the place, not but wot they did ought to be allowed to 'ave more talk than the English, thro' it bein' well-known as they 'ave got the gift of the gab, as the sayin' is; so if they wasn't to talk they didn't ought to 'ave let 'em in, and why not let 'em 'ave a Parlymint to theirselves over in Ireland.

"Yes," says Brown, as 'ad come in, "that's wot I says; let 'em try it, and see wot would be the hend."

"Ah!" I says, "you thinks as it would be as bad as Horsetrailier or Merryker worry soon."

"Lor," says Mrs. Padwick, "you don't mean to say as they quarrels in their Parlymint over there?"

I says, "Don't they just, with langwidge as would disgrace a bargee, thro' them bein' all in licker, as Brown can tell you that time as we was in the 'ouse at Melbung, as worry nigh come to a free fight."

"Wot can you expect," says Brown, "in a country where every blackguard's got a wote, and as a party for to be 'ead, as kep' a coal and

tater shed, as might be a 'onest man for all that, and not a reg'lar low-lived lot."

"Yes," I says, "and wotever Queen Wictorier would do if she was to come out, or even the Prince of Wales, as ain't proud, but would think as the coal and tater line were a drop to set down to tea with, as is no doubt the reason as he did not care to go, and in course the Princess, she put the kybosh on it the werry moment as they opened their mouths on the subje.

I must say as I do like the Hirish, not as they're as jolly over in Horsetrailier as they are at 'ome, cos with all their sufferin's they are a light-'arted, jolly lot, tho', in course, they've a deal to put up with, partikler 'avin' misshunaries sent over to Ireland to conwert them, just as tho' they was Jews, or rather Turks ; and I do say as I do not blame Mrs. Grady, as give the City misshun a dish-clout at 'is tail, and give the Biblewoman a armful of suds, as come and set down in 'er washus, a-talkin' about the Man of Sin, a-meanin' the Pope, as were down-right insultin'.

If they wants to conwert people, let 'em go among them Turks, as would put 'em out of their misery in a instant if they dared to go into one of their churches. Tho' I must say as misshunaries is put upon terrible, for nearly everyone 'ave got a fling at 'em, but they certingly bears it well, and in

general settles down quiet with their wives and children, and does well a-leavin' of the 'eathen to look arter theirselves.

I don't know where the fault is exactly with the Irish, and even Brown can't think 'ow to square 'em, and he can in general settle anything, give 'im time enough for to think it well over; but as to makin' out why ever Mrs. Flannigan should take and 'ave a party, and ask them parties as 'er 'usban' wouldn't set down with, except to get up a row, I can't think, as come in dead sulky at fust, and 'ave it in the end they certingly did; as was Mrs. Malchin and 'er married dorter in the name of Price, along with 'er 'usban' and his brother, as owed a grudge to Mrs. Grady, thro' her a-remarkin' as she thort as the pie 'ad got a suet crust, as is a thing you cannot eat cold; and Mrs. Malchin said was a good thing sometimes when you knocked over a baker's tray, as she done 'erself, as was tarts and a pie, that solid, as it weren't broken, and that thick as you might 'ave took and throwed it over the 'ouse. So I agreed with 'er as a suet crust were a thing I did not care for, never thinkin' of the Irish, only said, "Ah! that's the world that is, as the weakest always goes to the wall, as made Flannigan bust into tears, a-sayin', "Oh, my poor country!" as I were not illudin' to, but only Mrs. Malchin, as 'ad been shoved off the pavement by that baker's boy,

and give 'im a tap with 'er umbreller, as knocked over the tray as he 'ad on 'is 'ead, with a meat pie and some tarts, as made that boy that wild, that he took and butted her agin the wall with 'is 'ead that wiolent, as he stunned 'isself, thro' 'er a-slippin' on one side, and 'ad to be took to the 'ospital on a shetter, and no 'arm done to the pie, nor yet the tarts, for a party ketched the pie, as 'ad a suet crust, as made Mrs. Flannigan think we was jeerin' at 'er crust, as is all werry well for a beef-steak, but don't do for weel and 'am ; and poor Mrs. Malchin, she'd 'ad to pay for the tarts, so were the wictim arter all.

I never shall forget that man Flannigan arter supper, as would sing the "Warin' of the Green," and come and shouted that wiolent in my ear, as made me say, "Bother you, and the green, too ! Who cares wot you wears ? I'm sure I don't, if you wears nothink."

That give 'is good lady offence, as up and said as I were a outrage on common decency, and tho' she was a Protestant, she'd not 'ear 'er country insulted.

I says, "Who's insultin' of your country ?"

She says, "Why, you are ?"

"I says, "Me ?"

She says, "You'd like to see us in rags. Why don't you say, 'I means you,' Mrs. Brown ?"

I says, "I do not mean you, nor yet nobody else, and I shan't say no more."

"All right, old gal," says Flannigan; "and now let's 'ave another tumbler of punch and St. Patrick's Day!" And if he didn't begin a-mixin' of the whiskey, as he put werry little water to, and swallowed red-'ot, and begun a-singin' and a-dancin', and wanted me to take the floor along with 'im.

I says, "No, I thank you; when it comes to the floor, it's 'igh time I was in bed."

Then 'im and Mrs. Flannigan took and danced a jig, I must say, lovely, only they both come down 'eavy' once or twice with the 'eels of their boots on my toes, as made me jump agin.

We might 'ave 'ad a nice evenin' enuf but for young Price, as lodges along with Mrs. Padwick, as lost 'is temper with young Flannigan, as cut 'im out at all fours with Mrs. Padwick's grandorter, as is a pretty gal, just seventeen; and if he didn't say to me as Crumwell was the man for Ireland.

So I says, no doubt, a-thinkin' as Crumwell were a member of Parlymint, and never dreamin' has he meant that sarm-singin' 'umbug as cut off King Charles' 'ead, and set it up at Cherrin' Cross, where he is to this day up in heffigy like George the Fourth, as did used to 'ave railin's round, and 'ave seen myself covered with hoax on that day in

May as he were brort back, as died sudden at last, leastways, were took ill, as some do say were pison as cut 'im off; but as to Crumwell I never knowed he were Hirish.

So I says, "Then let 'em 'ave Crumwell by all means, and much good may he do 'em. I never 'eard sich a filly too, as broke out, and afore I could speak my 'ead of 'air were torn off, cap and all, and Flannigan were a-dancin' about the room with it on the fire shovel, as made young Price fly at 'im by the throat, and there was young Flannigan jumpin' on 'is back, with Mrs. Flannigin a-layin' into 'im with the tongs, and poor Mrs. Padwick fainted dead away, and me a-pertectin' of myself with the poker, while Mrs. Padwick's dorter were a-screamin' fire out of the winder, as brort out the parish ingin, as is only jest oppersite, with the plugs up in a minnit, and played slap thro' the winder on to us all jest as Brown come in and stopped it, and took me 'ome in a cab, with my 'ead done up in a shawl, as were that provokin' thro' bein' a new 'ead of 'air, as I put on for the fust time, as Mrs. Padwick said become me, down to the ground, so did her dorter, as ain't one to fawn, nor you could get to flatter.

But, law bless you, them Flannigans and Prices was all friends the next day, as is wot I likes in the Hirish, they are that light-'earted and don't bear

no mallis. Not as I 'olds with them sassinashuns, as is 'ole and corner work, as nobody could speak up for escept some of them wild Yankees, as 'olds up the French Riverlution, as is the same thing as them Commonyards, as they calls 'em in Paris, as is makin' a nice 'ash of things, and will soon be up to their necks in another row, as old Beastmark is only a-waitin' for jest to walk into their affections a little deeper, as will take and petition France up into other countries, jest like the Poles, as I well remember bein' split up by the Rooshins, as is a many a year ago now, runnin' on for fifty, as I knowed a party myself as come from there as called 'isself a Pole, tho' all the time a 'Ebrer Jew, as ain't no nation, and certingly were not clean, tho' as 'onest as the day, and not one of them blood-suckin' sort, tho' he sold leeches, as is gone out of fashion werry much now-a-days, and yet a fine thing for anything as is a-formin', partikler arter a blow, and yet did never ought to be put on the face thro' bein' a part as is subject to a hairysipilis a-settin' in, as 'ave brort many to death's door where the blood ain't 'ealthy, as runs in some families, and will fly to the nose, and no more drunk than I am, as is wot parties as is that spiteful might say of anyone as 'ave got a flush about the face, the same as Miss Boolle, as were a red face, elderly lady in the lace-mendin' line, as is jest my hage,

leastways, within two years, as 'ave took and married 'er father's prentice jest out of jackets, as in course is 'er busyness, nobody else's, as I'm sure Queen Wictorier never said as she'd sooner see 'er berried fust afore she'd let 'er ever clean a wail of 'ern, and as she didn't want to see 'er no more up 'er Court, cos in course it ain't likely, as anyone could respeck anyone as done sich a thing, as to the man, he wasn't but a boy, tho' in course everyone would look down on 'im the same as Brown, as only said "Poor devil!" when he 'eard as they was married at last, a-mutterin' somethink about a old fool.

I must say as I do not 'old with them differences in hages, as is bad enuf in a gal for to go and marry a old man for to be supported, as Brown calls only licensed infimy, but for a young man to take and give 'is name to 'is grandmother it's downright beastly, and in general turns out so in the hend.

I shan't never forget a old lady as I knowed well, as took a fancy to a boy as was a real boy, for they 'ad to wait for 'im to be of hage to get married, thro' 'is father a-interferin'. Well, they was married, and went off on a tower for the 'oney-moon, as she come back from with a black eye, as she said as she'd cort agin the bedpost, and as 'er Edwin were a angel, as called 'er Hangelineer, and they was painted a-settin' on a bank of flowers, like shepherds a-smilin' under the rose, as he were

a-'oldin' over 'er 'ead, as 'ad a 'ausom 'ouse, and carridges, and 'orses, and servints galore, as he run thro' every penny on in less than eighteen months, and then run away from 'er with 'er own lady's maid, as were French, as he'd made 'er take, and always talked French to, as were a saucy, idle minx, and couldn't 'old a needle, nor yet dress 'air; not as that signified to the old gal, as were as bald as a pig, and 'ad it made up every day by the prukier, and took to drinkin' in the end, and were no doubt 'ocussed the night as them two bolted, for they stripped 'er of everythink, down to 'er laces, and all the plate. He were away from 'er over two years, and she'd went into lodgin's in Camdin Town, to be out of the way of meetin' 'im, and were a-livin' on the trifle as he'd left of all 'er property, as he couldn't touch thro' settlement, as were under two 'undred; so she'd got three rooms as was nicely furnished on a floor, and 'ad a bit of plate about, and a few things as he'd been and pawned, and she'd got out agin.

It so 'appened as my dear mother did used to wash for 'er in 'er fust 'usban's time, and I'd always been in the 'abit of goin' to see 'er till she took and married that boy, and then I kep' out of the way till I 'eard she was in trouble, and then only went to see 'er thro' a-gettin' a note from 'er, and then she asked me to go agin. So thro'

that I see as she were a-breakin' for some months, and 'ad got 'er to give up drinkin' of 'ollands, as is a lowerin' sperrit; but she got lower and lower, and at last took to 'er bed, and then I did used to see 'er once or twice a week; she'd a very nice young woman for a servant, as told me one day as there 'ad been a man there overnight as were werry much in licker always, with a fieldmale, as were aperiently a furriner.

As it were late the gal wouldn't let 'em in, tho' the feller said as he would come in, as it was 'is lorful wife as he wanted to see.

She 'adn't said nothink to 'er missus, thinkin' as he was only some low waggerbone as were comin' the cadge.

So I says, "You're right;" and when I went up to the poor old lady I found she were much lower, and asked me not to leave 'er, as I promised I wouldn't, so stopped along with 'er, cos she told me as she wanted to alter 'er will.

I says, "All right," a-knowin' as she 'ad a niece as were married and bad off. So I sent for 'er lawyer, as come that same evenin' and see 'er alone, and then asked me if I'd mind witnessin' of the old lady's will along with 'is clerk.

We'd just done a-signin', and the clerk were gone, when in who should come but the doctor, as found the old lady much wuss, as I were sure she

were. I was a-talkin' to the lawyer in the front room as the doctor were a-seein' 'is patient in the back, when I 'eard a tap at the street-door. So goes to the landin' and listens as the door were opened, and 'eard it were my lord, as 'ad come, he said, to see 'is wife, and would see 'er too.

I goes back into the settin'-room and asked the lawyer if 'e'd mind a-steppin' into the dressin'-room, as was thro' the bed-room, with a fire and candles a-burnin', and asked the doctor to go in too, and then I 'urries back to the landin', and says over the bannisters, "Who's there?" for the young 'oman 'ad kep' 'im talkin' on the mat, accordin' to wot I told 'er.

A voice 'ollers out, "I'm come to see my wife as is lodgin' 'ere, and see 'er I will."

I says, "In welcome, sir, pray walk up;" and up he come.

When he see me, he says, "Are you the nuss; is she as bad that?"

I says, "She's werry bad, tho' I am not the nuss, but a friend come to see 'er."

He says, "Preshus low water she's got into if you're 'er friend."

I says, "She is werry low," not a-pretendin' to notice 'is sneers.

He says, "Let me see 'er?"

I says, "I'll see if she's awake," and were a-

goin' into 'er bed-room, as was foldin'-doors, when^a he walked past me into the room.

^a The poor old soul were a-dozin', and he goes up to the bed and says, "Well, Pussy, 'ere I am."

She opened 'er eyes, and I see as she knew 'im, for 'er face was terrors, as she said, "Don't strike me, pray don't. I'll give you everythink, but I can't bear a blow."

"All right, old lady," he says, "I'm glad to see as you're reasonable; let's shake hands."

She raised 'erself on 'er elber, and says, "Mrs. Brown, turn this man out. I will not 'ave 'im 'ere."

He says, "Mrs. Brown's got to do it."

I says, "Right you are. Are you a-goin' of your own accord, or must I use force."

He busts out a-larfin', and went ⁱⁿ to the settin'-room, and says, "Come, old gal, don't make a fool of yourself. I'm not goin' That party is my wife, and this is my 'ouse and furniture, so don't let's be nasty over it; you've got somethink to drink better than tea," as the tea-things was on the table, thro' me 'avin' give the lawyer a cup, and the feller 'e'd been a-eyein' the silver tea-pot.

I says, "I've got no licker nor anythink else for you; so you walk, or I'll 'ave you turned out, so that's all about it."

He turns round sharp and goes back to the

poor old 'oman's bedside, and says, "Send this old 'oman out of the room, or I'll kick 'er out."

The poor old soul says, "Oh! dear, Mrs. Brown, don't leave me to this ruffian, he'll murder me as he 'as nearly done more than once afore now."

I see 'im glare at the old lady, and I says to 'im, "Are you a-goin' or are you not?"

He says, "Certingly not; this is my wife, this is my 'ouse, and 'ere I stops till the old gal croaks; so you make yourself scarce, or I'll put you out, preshus quick, and that's all about it."

I says, "Werry well," and I goes towards the room where the lawyer and the doctor was.

"Ah!" he says, "you're a-goin' like a sensible 'oman arter all, as never interferes 'tween man and wife," and he turned away. Jest as I opened the door, the two gentlemen walked up to the poor old lady's bed.

I never see a man give sich a start as that feller did, when he turned round and saw 'em.

"Will you be so good as to walk into the next room," said the lawyer; whilst the doctor he went up to look at 'is pashunt.

"No," says the feller. "I shall not leave the room; this lady is my wife, and I'm not goin' to leave 'er to be murdered by a gang of swindlers."

"I am this lady's solicitor, and I request you to speak to me in the next room."

"I will not," were the anser.

"I am this lady's doctor," says the other, "and I command you to go in 'er name; if you will not, we must 'ave the perlice."

"I defy you. I am this lady's lorful pertecter. This is a conspiracy."

"You are not 'er pertecter, nor nothink else to 'er," says the lawyer. "She's got a judicious supuration, as well as a deed of settlement; and you dare interfere with 'er, or 'er property, I'll 'ave you afore the magistrit."

While they was a-talkin' and a-goin' on a lot more, I went back into the bed-room, but soon come back and give the doctor a sign as I wanted 'im, and when he got up to the bedside he see as it were all over. So he called in the lawyer, as broke it to that feller as says, "Then I'm master 'ere; so you all clear out."

The lawyer never said a word, but took and locked all the doors and drawers and sent for a perliceman, as made that feller walk 'is chalks pretty quick, as we found out as he were wanted for somethink else, and were quite a mussy as that poor soul were took, for altho' her bit of property were settled on 'erself, yet that waggerbone might 'ave give 'er a deal of trouble; and in course if women will be such fools, you must expect as they'll fall into the 'ands of blackguards, as no

man as calls 'isself a man would go and sell 'isself to a old woman like that.

But in course if there wasn't such fools in the world, why, wot would become of the knaves as must live on somebody or be either in prison or the workus.

I certingly were sorry for that old woman, for she told me 'erself as she were fond of 'er filthy bargain, as the sayin' is. In course he couldn't prove as he were the old lady's 'usban', though he did come to the funeral with 'is marriage lines and a 'atband. But the lawyer were too sharp for 'im, and took and proved 'er will and got the deed of supuration. So he were reglar flummixed, tho' he did pertend to shed tears into a 'ankercher with a black border, and 'ad a black walkin'-stick as he were a-leanin' on over the grave, and when he see the coffin he shed tears, and asked someone to read 'er age, and were told as she were eighty-four, said out aloud afore the minister and all, "The devil she was," as didn't sound like sorrer.

So that's why I can't a-bear them mixed-up marridges, the same as a old feller as we met a-wanderin' over in Horsetrailier; as 'ad been and made a young girl 'is wife as were only nineteen, poor wretch, and were drove to it thro' poverty, leastways, so she told me, a-sheddin' tears through me a-seein' a feller a-slippin' of a letter into my work-basket, as was next to 'er shawl on the table

of the saloon as were meant for 'er. There wasn't no address on that note except "To the Fairest of 'er Sect," or some such rubbish. It 'appened to be Valentine's Day, so I took it for a lark and opens it, and werry soon see as it meant mischief.

So I waits my chance and says to that feller,—
"I tell you wot it is, if I ketches you a-puttin' love-letters in my basket agin and askin' me to fly to the desert with you when we lands, I'll just give your note to the captin'."

He turned red and then pale and says, "I never rote to you."

I says, "You did, and here's your note, and if I was to tell my 'usban' he'd make you eat your words."

So he says, "Bless the woman! Do you think I'm mad?"

I says, "You're either mad or bad, to try and 'tice a woman as is married away from 'er lorful pertecter, and bring 'er to shame and misery."

He says, "Ah! I see you twig it. Well," he says, "I don't consider as I should do 'er any 'arm. I'd marry 'er as soon as she'd got rid of that old bag o' bones, as could be easy done."

I says, "I suppose you'd tice 'em up into the bush, and murder 'im and then marry 'er."

"Oh! no; she's agreed to divorce 'im."

"Then," I says, "in course you don't consider as

a solim hoath to be 'is lorful wife till death us do part goes for anythink."

"That' all rubbish," he says.

"And I suppose you'll say the same when you gets tired of 'er, cos, in course, if your solim vows, took at the halter, don't bind you, what's your word afore the register worth, I should like to know."

I 'ad 'arf the cabin along with that young ooman, as was took werry bad that night, thro' the wind a-gettin' up with a 'eavy sea on as nearly upset everythink.

She was werry bad for two days as nearly brort us to Sydney; so when she was better I give 'er a-talkin' to, for I says to 'er, "I says you're a wergin' on a wortex, my good soul, on as I might say the hedge of a pressypitch, as you might go over any moment;" so I says, "keep your weather eye up, and take care as you don't 'ave a bad fall, as is a thing as nobody of our sect ever gets over."

She turned werry red and tries the orty dodge fust, a-sayin' "Wot do you mean?"

"Why," I says, "I means as you're a-carryin' on a bad game."

She says, "I don't understand you."

Then I says, "I'll speak more plainer;" I says, "you're a carryin' on a game with that black whiskered bagman, as sent you a note under your beef-tea this werry day."

She says, "He's a-hofficer and an old friend of my 'usban'."

Then I says, "It's werry odd as your 'usban' and 'im don't never speak, but sets at table oppersite one another a-glarin' at 'im with rollin' eyes, as I've seen 'im at meals this two days; and as to bein' a hofficer, it's my opinion if he is as it's a sheriff's, and wot's more, I'll go bail he's as much married as you are. I've seen 'is game, as I don't believe ever see you afore you met on board the steamer from 'Obart Town, and then fell in with 'im agin at Horkland, as is a dog 'ole."

She says, "Oh! dear Mrs. Brown, don't betray me."

I says, "Don't betray yourself, nor yet the man as you've sworn to 'oner, love, and obey."

She busted into tears.

I says, "You give me them notes and let me put 'em thro' the port 'ole."

"Oh!" she says, "tear 'em up into bits, little bits fust."

I says, "Do you take me for a fool;" and she give me three notes as I took and tore to shreds and throwed thro' the port into the sea, cos I knowed the danger of pitchin' a letter out to sea not tore up, as were wot a party did off the Cape, as was blowed back on to the deck and were picked up by the identical lady as didn't ought to 'ave seen it.

Cos there was a young feller as 'ad been a-spoonin' 'er all the way from Madeary, as was over forty if a 'our, with both 'air and teeth hartifishul, and a glass eye, as she couldn't 'elp, thro' a poke with a stick. Well, at the Cape there come aboard a yaller-'aired reg'lar perfeshunal beauty, as soon got all the men round 'er like flies on a empty sugar tub; even Brown said as she were a fizzer.

Well, this young feller as 'ad been a-spoonin' the glass-heyed lassie, a settin' at 'er feet on deck, a readin', and singin' and playin', no sooner see this new yaller-'aired perfeshunal beauty than he left off a-settin' on deck with the old gal, and took to 'angin' over the new one, at the pianer and all about. She didn't give 'im no partikler incouragement, thro' 'avin' of other fish to fly, as the sayin' is, as she 'ooked 'em right and left.

Well, this young feller when he couldn't bring 'er to book took and 'rote 'er a letter a-sayin' as he loved the werry deck as she walked on, and took and turned the other into all sorts of ridicule, a-sayin' as 'er 'air tho' red were false, and a-makin' fun of 'er eye; a-sayin' as she'd been a-castin' of it at 'im day and night all over the ship.

Well, this 'ere Cape stunner she took and tossed 'is note out of 'er port jest as she opened it, so in course the wind took, and carried it up on to the deck to the werry spot where the glass-heyed one were

a-settin', as knowin' the 'ritin' and thinkin' it were a billydoo from 'er false one, as 'ad come back after 'avin' cut 'er for over a week ; so she took and read it as gave a scream as made the bo'sin nearly jump out of 'is skin, as rung the fire bell in 'is confusion, and everyone rushed to the buckets and 'ose, while that poor thing were a-kickin' and screamin' on the flat of 'er back, with 'er 'air and 'er eye all about the deck, as four quartermasters 'ad to set on 'er to keep 'er down, till she were carried in shrieks to 'er cabin, and never showed no more all the woyage.

As to that young feller, as were a reg'lar 'ound, he were sent to Coventry, for the yaller-'aired beauty she come on deck with 'er gloves on, a-brandishin' of a 'orsewhip like a drorn sword, a-sayin' as she'd pull 'is nasty nose, now as 'er 'ands was covered, and give 'im a good 'idin' for darin' to put 'is notes into 'er plate at lunch, and all thro' 'im not 'avin' tried 'is ground afore he put 'is foot on it, and 'er a-pitchin' of 'is note to the winds afore it were tore up. Well, afore we parted, I give that young wife a good talkin' to, with good advice, but might ave spared my breath, for tho' I choked off the bagman, she bolted soon arterwards, and went up country with a young feller as 'ad been in the perlice, and I see the old fool of a 'usban' a-goin' into one of the churches or chapels, as there's lots on all over

the place in Sydney, and if he didn't take and turn on me like a fiery furnace broke loose, and ask wot I'd been and done with 'is wife.

I says, "Me done with your wife?"

"Yes," he says, "you was always a-plottin' together."

I says, "Never! not as I'm surprised to 'ear as she's been and left you, for wotever else could you expect at your hage of a gal out of a lunchin-bar;" and off I walks, not a-wantin' to be mixed up with no rows 'twixt man and wife, as you always gets the wuss on, and no thanks into the bargain.

We was up in Queensland some months arter that, as is about the 'ottest place as ever I were in, with muskeeters like mad dogs a-bitin' on you day and night. We was a-stoppin' at a bit of a town, as the 'otel were a reg'lar shanty, and the landlady were Hirish and a good soul, tho' I must say as she weren't over tidy, and 'er 'usban' always out of the town thro' bein' a reg'lar 'Ome Ruler, so never looked arter the busyness, and a-talkin' about the 'Merrykins a-conkerin' England for to give liberty to Ireland.

So, I says, "Bother politics, as I 'ates the werry name on, as always leads to bad blood, as is why a fight's a good thing sometimes, for it lets it out, either by the nose, or it might be a broken 'ead."

"Indeed, you're right," says the wife, "and me

with trouble enuf on my 'ands, for there's the poor craythur we took in last night a-sinkin' fast, and the baby's jest dead."

"Lor," I says, "poor thing, 'ow melancholy."

"Faith, your right," says she, "and I don't know what to do to look arter 'er, for I've no one to help me, and got the supper to cook."

I says, "Where is the poor creetur', I'll look arter 'er," cos tho' I can cook, I didn't care to do it arter the Horsetrailian ways, as is all fryin' and fat.

She says, "She's close by, come and see 'er," and leads me to a sort of a out'ouse, as weren't much better than a knife'ouse in England, and there in the corner were a iron bed, with two others in the room, almost touching, and there in the corner was a fieldmale, as were aperiently asleep.

I says to Mrs. Farrell, "I'll set 'ere till she wakes, and you go about your supper." She went off like a shot, a-sayin' you've got a 'art tho' you are English. I set a good bit watchin' that poor thing, as I were told 'ad only been confined the night afore, and 'ad come on the tramp ever so far, 'arf starved, and wet to the skin.

She seemed werry restless, but 'ad 'er face turned away, so I couldn't see wot she were like, but knowed she was young by 'er 'ead of 'air, as were all about the pillar.

I see by 'er clothes, as was a-layin' on one of the beds, as they 'ad been good, tho' frightful shabby, and were the same as 'er boots, as was trod to pulp.

She got more and more restless, so at last I went up to 'er, and says, "Is there anything as you would fancy?" She turned and looked at me, and the light fell on 'er face, for the sun were a-settin' like a ball of fire, tho' there 'ad been wet for three weeks afore, and when it do rain in them topical parts it do rain.

I werry nigh give a scream when I caught sight of that face, for if it wasn't that old man's wife as 'ad lewanded with the perlice.

I didn't say a word, but asked 'er if she'd like a little tea, not but wot in my opinion, if I were ever so bad, and they come and offered me a cup of tea in Horsetrailier, it would finish me right off.

She shook 'er 'ead, and sunk back that faint as I went for my own brandy and a candle, for it were dark in a instant, as it's the way over there, thro' the sun a-droppin' that sudden as you'd think he'd been and over-reached 'isself at sea, or else as a nail 'ad come out suddin, like a picter 'angin' on a wall, as will often give way when least expected.

I got back to that poor creetur, as that kind 'arted landlady 'ad been and made clean and com-

fortable in 'er own things, jest afore I see 'er, and I found her a-sinkin' rapid.

I give 'er the brandy jest as Mrs. Farrell come back to see 'ow she were a-gettin' on, and to say as the priest, as 'ad been with 'er in the mornin' 'ad come agin.

I says, "Then send 'im 'ere, for she's past all 'uman 'elp."

That priest were a rough dimond, dressed like a navvy, as were only on the tramp, and werry poor 'isself, and had found this poor thing were 'is perswashun.

He come in and knelt down by 'er bed, and said somethink to 'er as she seemed to understand, and tried to speak to 'im, but were too low. So I went to the other side and give 'er a drop more brandy, and then she knowed me, for she took my 'and and kissed it.

So I says to the priest, "Shall I leave the room?"

He says, "There is no occasion; I prepared 'er for death this mornin'."

I says, "It would be a blessin' if we was all prepared every mornin' and night; but," I says, "I think as she's dosin';" and so she were, but only for a few minutes, and then she opened 'er eyes, and seein' the priest by 'er side, she smiled faint, then looked at me and shed tears, and give a sign as tho' she wanted to speak to me.

So I puts my 'ead down close to 'er mouth, and she whispers to me, "If ever you see 'im, ask 'im to forgive me. I was a bad, wicked gal when I married 'im, tho' he was deceived. I know I 'ave sinned; I 'ope I have had some of my punishment. He nearly killed me, robbed me of heverythink, and then left me on the roadside to die. No, no; not the poor old man—the other."

She spoke so quick and so low as I couldn't 'ardly follow 'er.

She said, "Do see 'im, please do;" and then she gave me a kiss, a-sayin', "You don't despise me?"

I says, "Despise you, my dear! certingly not; it ain't for us to judge nobody but ourselves, and to 'ope as there's mercy for all."

"Yes," says the good priest, "for all, if they will but ask it;" and then he took and stood up and 'eld out 'is 'and over that poor thing as I were a-'oldin' up in my arms, kissed a cross as she'd got in 'er 'ands; and so she passed away from this sinful world for ever.

She were laid in 'er grave with 'er hinfant in 'er harms; and lovely they both looked, covered over almost with flowers, that seemed to be for the angels to rest on, as the priest said would bear 'er ransomed soul to Paradise.

I 'adn't forgot about 'er last words to me, so

when we was back in Sydney I looked out for that old man, and passed the church where I'd seen 'im go in at, when the congregation was both a-goin' in and a-comin' out, but never could see 'im ; so at last I up and spoke to the minister, as were a nice old gentleman with a ugly dorter as might be 'is wife. They were werry pleasant, but they didn't neither on 'em know anythink of sich a party as I spoke about, and so I wished 'em good-mornin' ; and jest as I turned away, the party as looks arter the church he come out, and were a-lockin' the gate.

He remembered that old feller well enuf when I give 'is description, but 'adn't no knowledge of wot were become of 'im ; so I give 'im up, a-thinkin' as preaps he might 'ave took and died thro' sorrer for 'er, cos, tho' 'arts is tuff things, yet there is feelin' ones as will fret theirselves to fiddle-strings, as the sayin' is, over anyone as they cares for. I kep' a good look-out for that old man all the time we were in Horsetrailier, but never see a westment on that dyed up old guy, with 'is paddin's and stays, as were 'ow he were kep' together in 'is lavender pants and patten leather boots, as he couldn't 'ardly crawl about in.

One Sunday arternoon, jest when we was back in London, Mrs. Flannigan's dorter were a-goin' to 'ave 'er hinfant christened, and asked me if I'd go along with 'er, cos she felt nervous thro' her nuss

'avin' been called away suddin, and the godmother a mere gal.

I do not 'old with goin' to a place of worship for to stare about you jest for the sake of 'earin' of the music, as is why Mrs. Flannigan took me one Sunday to the Catholics, as sounds werry solim when they rings a little bell, so never wouldn't go no more; but in course a christenin' is different, as there ain't no bells, tho' a many more things used than water over it.

Well, when it were all over, and we was a-comin' out, who should I run agin but that old 'usban' from Horsetrailier a-walkin' with a fieldmale as wasn't no lady, as I knowed in a hinstant he'd been and doubled 'is dye, and 'ad got on 'is stays and 'is lavender continuations, as they calls 'em, tho' for all that he were tumbled into the reg'lar old grey-'eaded granfather when you come to look at the roots of 'is whiskers. I knew 'im in a moment, and he knowed me, for he turned 'is 'ead away, and were a-'obblin' away when I follored 'im up and says, "I asks your pardin, sir, but as you once spoke to me in the streets, tho' far and far away, I think I might take that liberty with you."

He stared at me that 'ard, as made me ask 'im if he remembered me.

He says, "Remember you? I never saw you; cos," he says, a-leavin' that fieldmale, and comin'

close to me, "why, you're the party as enticed my gal away from me."

"Well," I says, "I can't stop to tell you 'ow 'rong you are over that; but," I says, "if you will give me ten minnits any time, I've somethink werry partikler to say to you, as am in a 'urry now;" for I see as they was a-waitin' for me, and was all of a fidget for fear as that hinfant should take cold; not as they're liable to the fust week, partikler when done up like a bundle, with a wail over its face.

He says, "Give me your address."

So I 'ad the antelope of a old letter as were directed to me, and give it 'im, and then he shuffles away, werry weak on 'is legs.

Within a week he 'rote to me to come and see 'im, as were not far from that chapel as where I'd been to the christenin', as is down Chelsea way, as 'ave been rebuilt, and can remember it well, a little chapel, as is where the old penshuners did used to go along with the Duke of York's boys, as was brort up that way thro' their parents bein' the Hirish perswashun, as 'ad fought and died like lions for their country.

It was pretty nigh three weeks arter seein' 'im afore I could get to that old man, as give me two Toosdays to choose, as were a long journey for me, thro' bein' two busses, as I couldn't go in while the

bad weather lasted, thro' all bein' that full, with mud over your ancles.

I shan't never forget the day as I did go, as were damp and chilly; so in course I 'ropped up well, for fear as I might get a chill after a 'ot climate.

I got a empty bus as passes our door, and tho' I 'ad a struggle for to get in, and were stove up in the hend, so as I couldn't 'ardly dror my breath, with a netted Cardigan and two skirts on, and was ready to drop when I got to Cherrin' Cross, as is where I had to change busses with the one for Chelsea.

When I got out on to the pavement, I reglar staggered, and 'ad to 'old on to my umbreller so as not to fall prosterit on the pavement.

"'Old on, old gal," says the conductor.

I says, "Who are you a-talkin' to, with your old gals?" I says. "I'm all right."

"Ah!" he says, "that's wot they always says when you tries to 'elp 'em;" and up he jumps on 'is board, a-goin' off with a whistle and a grin, like a blue-faced baboon as he were.

I think I must 'ave stood 'arf an 'our, with my back a-leanin' agin a lamp-post, afore I could get my breath and the right bus, for they was either full, or else a-gallopin' on and wouldn't wait for me, as couldn't 'ave 'urried, not to 'ave saved my life,

with a bull behind me, as might have tossed me in and welcome.

Indeed, when I did get a bus, it took three on 'em to get me on to the step, and then 'ad to butt at me for to get me thro' the door.

As no doubt were well meant, tho' overdone, and sent me a-sprawlin' at the bottom of the bus, thro' bein' empty, tho' the straw were that muddy, as siled me from 'ead to foot, with the two parties a-kneelin' on my back as were a-follerin' me in.

The strings and 'ooks and eyes as give way in my struggles to get on to the seat made me shiver agin, partikler in gettin' out, for I were afraid as I'd give way in some wital part, as the sayin' is, as might reduce me piecemeal.

When I got out of the bus, I 'adn't far to walk to where that old party were a-livin', as were a nice little 'ouse, and a tidy young ooman to open the door, as showed me in to a small parlour, where a elderly party was at work, as said as she 'ad been espectin' me, as she said she'd somethink to say to me afore the old man, as 'ad lived with 'im when 'is fust was alive, and never see 'is second, as he picked up somewheres abroad, and she wanted me to tell 'er about. I didn't fancy that old woman, and wasn't goin' to tell her as I knowed as that poor gal 'ad come out of a bar in Horse-trailier, as is a free place, and no dorter of mine

shouldn't never go into one, as is liable to insults, if not 'ticed away to ruin and misery.

Not as they wander from the paths of wirtue unbeknown, as is wot no 'otel bar never was in this world, tho' there's lots of 'em as is 'ighly respectable, tho' in a gen'ral way flighty, as is wot I don't like to see no young gal esposed to, cos tho' you can't put a 'old 'ead on to young shoulders, yet a young person ought to be a little stand off, partikler with the oppersite sects 'angin' about.

Tho', 'pon my word, arter wot we 'ave seen, it's no use talkin' about young 'uns, for old women is bigger fools than the young, and young men mean sperrited sneaks as'll take and marry a nasty old beast of a woman as might be 'is granmother, and all for 'er beastly money, as I considers as ladies and gentlemen ought to send 'em both to Coventry, as the sayin' is, and I'm sure I couldn't wisit 'em myself, for I should bust out a-larfin' in their werry faces, if not turned sick, as is wot I calls rewoltin' both sides, and I wishes sich parties both luck of one another; cos, in course, she'll be drove mad with jealousy, and he'll be a-wishin' 'er dead, so as he may marry the gal of 'is 'art. Well, as I were a-talkin' to that elderly party a-givin' of hewasif ansers, she says to me, "I do 'ope you will do me a favour in not a-sayin' as you've seen me, cos I wants to find out if he did doat on the ground she walked on."

Ah! I says, "I should think as he must 'ave been doatin' to 'ave thought of marryin' a poor gal as in course were drove to it thro' poverty as many a one is."

"So," she says, "I'll send the gal, and see if he's ready for you; and now as you're dry she 'ad better brush you down, for you're dreadful muddled," and so I were; not as that gal did me much good, for she only smeared me all over. I'd took a little somethink 'ot when I fust got in thro' bein' benumbed, for it were that cold, a reglar toe-biter, as the sayin' is, and my feet were lumps of hice, tho' I 'ad got on two pair, as the outside was lambs-wool, cos I can't a-bear anythink as is scrubby agin my skin.

Arter a bit I were showed into that old man as 'ad took cold and 'ad got roomatics, so were a-settin' over the fire, tho' dressed out swell in 'is dressin' gownd, with a worked cap and slippers, 'as began a-grinnin' and showin' his teeth as soon as he see me.

He'd got picters of one or young creeturs a-'angin' up, and two or three fottygrafts of gals, some on 'em English and others as 'ad been took over in Sydney, cos 'avin been done there myself I knowed the style as is 'ighly glazed. So seein' as that old party a-fumblin' for his 'ankercher I thort he were a-goin' to take on, so I says to 'im, "Now," I

says, "don't give way to no lookin' backs, but," I says, "forget and forgive, and 'ear 'er last words as she spoke to me."

He says, "You don't mean to say as she's dead."

I says, "She died in these harms."

"I'm deuced glad to 'ear that," says he.

I says, "Wot?"

He says, "I'm glad to 'ear it, cos I've got my heye on another, and was only waitin' to get a divorce."

I says, "You're an old brute and I'm sorry as I give myself the trouble to come to speak to sich an old waggerbone as I considers was silin' my lips—you nasty old man."

He says, "Get out of the room, you old cat."

I says, "I'm a-goin'," and were jest a-goin' when in come 'is 'ousekeeper, white with rage, as 'ad been a-listenin' at the dōor, no doubt.

She says, "Oh! indeed; you're a-goin' to marry, are you; and one of those dollymops of things," and she took and swep' them fottygrafts into the fire-place.

"How dare you?" says the old man, "I thort you was out for the day."

"I know you did; and as to dare, I'll send for your granson, and we'll lock you up, you old fool."

That old man flew into a rage and got 'old of

'is stick, as he couldn't move without thro' roomatics, but the old woman was too quick for 'im and 'ad grabbed it fust, and then come behind 'im and took and wheeled 'is chair away from the fire just as he were a-goin' to ring the bell.

So he says to me, " Don't let this old devil murder me."

I says, " You've made your bed and must lay on it; but," I says to 'er, " don't be too 'ard on 'im, cos he must be a frightful hage."

He says, " I ain't only jest turned fifty."

I says, " You must 'ave turned a-many years ago then."

" Lor' bless you, yes." She says, " He's jest on heighty, as 'ave borrered my money a-pertendin' as he'd left me heverything, and as he'd marry the moment as he were free, and thought as I'd gone out for the day. Oh! you old willin, I'll 'ave the law on you."

He begin a-whimperin' and a-cryin', a-sayin' as it were only 'is fun, and as he'd showed me the fottygrafts as he'd brort for a lark out in Horse-trailier, cos I knowed the parties.

So I says, " I wish you good day," and not a-goin' to father 'is lies I walks out of the room, and says to that good ooman, " If he owes you money get it out of 'im, for I can tell you he were a-walkin' with one of them fottygrafts last Sunday

fortnight, and," I says, "'e's a reg'lar black-'arted old waggerbone as ever dyed 'is whiskers and wore a wig for to conceal 'is ears ; with one foot in the grave, not as he can 'elp havin' broke it at the ankle."

I didn't say much more, but walked off and never did feel more sold than goin' all that way to see that old beast, as I never 'eard no more on, and don't want to, tho' I think he's got 'is 'Ome Ruler in that old ooman, as is a dragon to look at, and sarve 'im right, as ain't got no more feelin' than a post boy's arms, as is nearly pulled out of the sockets. I don't deny as sometimes a young ooman may marry a old man and may be 'appy yet, as the sayin' is. Cos there was Emma 'Omes, as were in the cap and bonnet line, as got a werry poor livin' at it and werry much a one side thro' a-settin' so close at it, with weak eyes, and broken chilblains on 'ands and feet as reg'lar as winter set in. Well, she was over thirty when she married old Parkins, as were a retired cook-shop, and a nice little property he'd made, tho' seventy-eight, and a nice 'ome, as she kep' that neat, and tho' 'is dorter were orful put out at fust she come round, tho' with a large family comin' on 'erself, for the old man married late the fust time, as I consider forty-five, and lived fourteen years arter 'is second marriage. Emma she made that 'ome comfortable, and always glad to see 'is family, and made

'im give 'is dorter more money than she'd ever 'ad afore, and sent one of 'er boys to sea, and 'prenticed two more; as the old man wouldn't never 'ave done but for 'er. So you see things turns out different, partikler in 'er case, as there wasn't no family. So she were a real 'Ome Ruler, tho' she'd 'ad 'er faults when younger; but lived to see the horror of 'er ways in encouragin' both the baker and the lamplighter, as both throwed 'er over, arter keepin' company more than a year, and then it turned out as the baker were married with a family, and as to the lamplighter he were a reg'lar burglar, and ended 'is days at Portland, so he wasn't no great loss.

I must say as I do think as them laws agin biggimy ain't strict enuf, not but wot I blames the gals for marryin' a man as they don't know 'ardly nothink about; partikler a sojer, or a sailor, as is 'ere to-day and gone to-morrow, as the sayin' is; tho' some on 'em is gone to-day and 'ere to-morrow, the same as old Simmin's dorter, as lived at Portsea, and 'er father shet 'is door on a young feller, as he didn't care about, as took it that mild and pertended to shed tears in goin', but come back two day's arter and got 'er to go off with 'im, as 'ad got two wives in the I'le of Wight and one at Poole a-ready; not but wot 'er brother-in-law gave 'im a good 'idin' at Ryde one Sunday arternoon in the open street, not as that did 'er any good, with twins on 'er

'ands as 'er father wouldn't take in, tho' he allowed 'er ten shillin's a week to the day of 'is death, as was proved to be that feller's lorful wife arter all, thro' the others bein' illegal some'ow; with no children, as were a mussy. But, lor' bless your 'art, there's no tellin' 'ow to rule a 'ome, if ever so small, and as to a large family, it's drove many a-one to 'is grave in sorrer, and tho' the Hirish is in a general way all fond of one another, their 'omes down by the Docks, as I've seen somethink on in my time, ain't werry well ruled, but pre'aps if they was all over in Ireland together, they'd get on better, as is no doubt their reasons for a-wishin' to all go back there, and make 'ome 'appy, as there's no place like it, specially the Hirish, cos if they do fall out they falls in agin, and if they keeps it to theirselves it's nobody else's busyness but their own.

I shan't never forget the O'Farrels, as was two doors off at Stepney, as never could keep their joys nor yet their sorrers to theirselves, for when 'is wife 'ad three at a birth, as Queen Victorier sent 'er three goldin sovrins for, a sovrin a 'ead, why O'Farrel brewed punch by the gallon, and throwin' up the parler winder one Sunday arternoon, asked parties as was a-passin' to drink, as was werry nigh 'er death, thro' a chill as she got by a thorer draft, as 'er bed-room were the back parler, with foldin' doors, and two panes of glass out of the

winder, jest over 'er 'ead, as nailin' up a towel agin didn't keep the hair out, with no curtins to the bed, as never wore a night-cap, with a 'ead of 'air like a mop, as I always considered were a sign of the tar-brush, as the sayin' is, thro' 'er mother bein' out in the West Hinges, when a gal, I've 'eard say as were married to a sojer, tho' 'er fust were a coloured-sarjint, as were afterwards steward aboard one o' them steamers as she went out in, nussin' a family. I never shall forget them O'Farrels the night as the boy were nearly scalded to death, thro' 'is gran'mother a-tryin' to wash 'im in a large tub of scaldin' water, as she were a-goin' to force 'im into, and would 'ave done it too, only in 'is struggles he got from 'er, and shoved 'er back'ards into the tub 'erself, as would 'ave been 'er death but for 'er wearin' sich thick things, as O'Farrel come in, and seein' 'er settin' in the tub give a 'owl, and pulled 'er out all steamin' and screamin', as give 'im sich a fright that he throwed up the winder and 'ollered fire till he brort the injins, as filled the place with steam, and the sparks a-flyin' set fire to Mrs. Mullin's linen, as were a-'angin' out in 'er bit of front gardin, as werry nigh burnt the street down, and would 'ave done if the wind 'adn't changed suddin, as it often do.

I must say as some of them Hirish gals is pretty, partikler the eyes, as is mostly blue, tho' I 'ave

seen a good many as 'ave 'ad 'em both black, as in course they wasn't born with, as the least tap will sometimes give, partikler on the bridge of the nose, not as it were a tap as took all Ellen O'Leary's back 'air out by the roots, thro' bein' shet in the door, as she said were 'er mother's fault, as aggravated O'Leary till he took and turned 'er out of the room along with 'is wife, not a-noticin' as 'e'd locked the door with 'is wife's back 'air, as were all down 'er back, shet in; while 'er mother a-thinkin' as he were a-goin' to do 'is wife a mischief was a-draggin' 'er out away from 'im by the apron, as she kep' a-pullin' at that wiolet, never a-givin' 'er dorter's back 'air a thort, as give way at the roots the werry same moment as the apron-strings come off with a crush, and sent the old 'oman a-flyin' downstairs, as nearly killed three children as was a-settin' there a-playin' at ladies and gentlemen, and upset Mrs. O'Dwyer and 'er usban', as lived in the parler, as was jest a-comin' in with a large tub of pig-wash, as they'd been round a-collectin' in a truck, as was drored by a donkey, as all rolled together out of the street door, and 'arf drowned two parties as were a-passin', let alone spilin' of their clothes, as were a-goin' to the play, and 'ad to turn back drenched with that pig-wash, as the smell on were enuf to pison any one, let alone the grease, as in course pigs thrives on, tho' a thing

as I never would 'ave kep' in my 'ouse any more than pour it down a drain, as I considers it best to throw it over the gardin, partikler of a grape-wine, as nourishes the roots; and when Brown put a bit of glass over oun, as growed up by the water-butt, the grapes was werry nigh as large as damsons, tho' not many on 'em, yet the same as 'Ampton Court, as Brown got a cuttin' on when they was a-trimmin' on it, as come from forrin parts along with the Royal Family, as is kep' for the Queen's table, and every branch counted, as I've see myself in full bearin', and a fine sight too, not but wot they wants thinnin', cos if too many, some is sure to be stunted in their growth, as is often the way with children, as requires lookin' arter and trainin' well in growin' up, tho' certingly one family, where my own cousin, in the name of Burril, were nuss, and twenty-one in family, as all growed up to man'ood; tho' one dorter were burnt, poor thing, thro' a Christmus tree, and two more died out in Hinjier.

Talk of 'ome rulin', they certingly was over 'ome ruled, as did used to be their mother's boast, as she 'ad seven in the drorin'-room and seven in the skool-room, and seven in the nursery; and wouldn't never let any on 'em out of the skool-room till the seven in the drorin'-room was off her hands; as were all werry well for the fust lot thro' five bein' boys, but the second seven, as was all gals, and as

plain a lot as they makes 'em, they was a orful time in gettin' off, as kep' their three last sisters in the skool-room that long as drove the youngest, as were over thirty, for to run away with the gardener, and two on 'em made love over the blind to the milk-man, as bein' a married man, took and rote to their parents, as led to a reglar rumpus, and two on 'em bein' sent abroad to be finished off, as one of 'em married a German barrun, and the other she turned nun.

In my opinion the less rulin' at 'ome the better. So it is with the Hirish, no doubt, cos why ever can't Parnell and sich like let 'em alone, cos they don't care about gettin' them their rites, as shootin' landlords can never be; and as to Miss Parnell a-talkin', she wants a good spankin', I should say, the same as Mrs. Gidduns gave 'er grandson with the 'oly shovel when she kotched 'im a-touchin' of the cat up with a red-'ot poker, never a-thinkin' as the old lady would find it out thro' the poor animal's skin a-smellin' when singed, as gave' im that lessin as he won't forget in a 'urry, a good-for-nothink young waggeberbone he growed up, as it's a mussy as he 'listed, and went off when sixteen, for he was up up to his pranks all over the place. The 'Ome Rule as I likes is not the rod of ion, but the cord of silk, as ain't never felt and yet 'old as tight as wax, not a-floggin' is any good as 'ave made more

'ardened children than enuf, but not so bad as a overdose of chapel as was the way with them young Keys, as were all carney afore their father's face, and sich limbs as never was when 'is back were turned, and werry nigh killed 'im when they was brort up to the Criminal Court for murder, as was a poor gal as the eldest wanted got rid on, cos she threatened to show him up to the minister of the chapel, as is where she met 'im fust, as took and ticed 'er out for a walk one Sunday evenin', and pushed 'er into the canal with 'er 'ands tied and a 'ankerchief over 'er mouth, and 'is beast of a brother 'elpin' 'im, as both was commuted to penal servitude for life, as I don't consider to be justice, tho' better than lettin' em off altogether as they did a waggerbone over the water down Greenwich way, as was all cant and 'umbug.

But, lor, it's a mussy to think one ain't got nothink to do with it and no busyness of mine, for I certingly would not stand 'angin' poor people, and makin' out as them as is well off is mad, partikler a wretch as could 'ave the 'art to kill 'er own children just to spite 'er 'usban' as, in my opinion, did ought to be burnt in Smithfield, as is a deal wuss than any of them marters as was ever brort to the stake, as I 'eard a minister of the 'Stabshed Church in lecturin' call all the names as he could lay 'is tongue to with my own ears, and took and

pitched into Queen Lizzabeth, as, he said, were wuss than Jezzble, or any other she-devil.

I only went to that lecture, along with Miss Pilkinton, to 'ear 'im over in Lambeth, as they do say is more 'igh church than the Pope, thro' bein' a bishop 'isself, on the quiet, as were consecrated over the see, jest to defy the Archbishop of Canterbury, as Miss Pilkinton says they means to 'ave out of Lambeth Pallis werry soon, now as she 'ave been and jined the Rittyalists, as don't 'old with the Pope, nor yet the Queen bein' over 'em, but wants to set up on their own dunghills, as the sayin' is, jest like Spurgin or the City Temple, as is both that independents, as they don't submit to nobody, escept in course the pew'olders, specially now as Gladstin 'ave jined them, and rounded on them 'Ome Rulers, as he'll put in prisin over in Ireland, as is wuss places, they do say, than wot Gladstin 'rote about over in Naples, as I've been to myself, and see them Italian convix the other day a-coalin' the steamer, as was a miserable set, and no doubt deserved the chains as they was a-workin' in, and if they was let out to-morrow they'd take and get put in agin, like Davitt, the next day. I don't suppose as prisins is meant to be 'appy 'omes, escept when you're rich and a officer, and insults a young lady in a railway that gross as you're put in quod for it, cos then you're let

live in the guv'nor's 'ouse, and 'ave your friends to see you every day, without your 'air bein' cut nor nothink personal done to disfigure you, as shows as there ain't one law for the rich and another for the poor, as is wot a navvy would get penal servitude for life for, and serve 'im right too in my opinion, if he were the Hemprer of Chiner. While we're a-makin' sich a row over 'Ome Rule in Ireland, it's a pity as we don't look at 'ome, and not 'ave poor creeturs a-dyin' of starvation in the streets, and old paupers turned out to sweep away the snow at nearly eighty, and told as if cold a little work will warm 'em, as is a nice 'ome ruler for a workus, not but wot there is good men in some workuses as is comfortable 'omes for old people of all sects, specially the infirmery, as I went to see a old party in, as did used to sweep a crossin' till froze to death pretty nigh to the ion post as she stood agin, and were that comfortable in a warm room and a good fire with a clean bed, as smiled all over 'er face when I give 'er a bit of tea and sugar, and partikler a 'arf ounce of snuf, as she liked a pinch on now and then to clear 'er 'ead, as 'adn't no 'ome to break up but a old bedstead, and brort 'er teapot with 'er, and a cup and saucer, along with a plated teaspoon, as 'adn't a relation in the world to leave em to, even if she were to go back to Ireland, as she'd left over fifty year, and

didn't know 'er own age, tho' she'd got 'er marriage lines, and knowed as 'er cat were taken care of by 'er naybour, as she'd give 'er few sticks of furniture to take care on in case she should ever come out, as ain't likely in this world, thro' 'avin' been eighty many years ago, as the priest told me as 'ad come in to see 'er, and 'ad service there of a Sunday in a little chapel, leastways a room as were used for the purpose, as shows as there's liberty of consence, as is wot I 'olds with, so long as it's fair all round, and not like them Germins, as fust pitches into the Catholics and then into the Jews, and will be down on the Protestints next, till they've drove all religions out of the country, and then old Beastmark will be in 'is glory, as I don't consider to be a good 'Ome Ruler in no sense of the word, cos no one can't get on in this world without religion, unless they are denuded savidges in a state of natur, as is everlastin' massykers, and ends in eatin' one another, as ain't the way to make 'ome 'appy in my opinion, tho' I 'ave 'eard say in New Zealin as it's their way to show affections for each other, as in my opinion did ought to esterminated the nasty wretches, not as I believes all them stories as they tells agin the natives over there, as is werry often made up for to escuse their bein' butchered, so as the white man may collar their lands, as is wot they've got their eye on all over the place, and

I'm sure I've met with white men as no devils can't be blacker, and a nice esample to savidges, as they teaches to be ippercrits, and to drink, and cheat, and rob, while some on 'em learns a lot of 'imms and texts as they gives 'em a cow or somethink, as in course is only bribin' 'em into ippocrissy, as ain't true religion. It give me a orful turn when Brown come in Sunday night and told me as they'd been and killed the Hemprer of Roosher, for tho' I never did admire 'is ways that's no reason as he should be murdered in that orful way, as it's a coward's act, I don't care who he is, as makes your blood bile, as is no better than savidges, wherever they does it, as all comes of these ere Socialists, as don't believe in God nor devil, so in course 'as nothink to feer but the perlice and the gallus, and don't care for their own lives.

Ah! it's all werry fine to talk about these ere new ideers, as there ain't no life arter this, where there's punishments and rewards a-waitin' for us, but if that's what's to betort in our newskools, then everybody 'll do wotever everybody pleases and we shall be wuss than any Kaffirs or Zulus as ever lived, cos they 'ave got laws, but we shall all be a-doin' wot we pleases a-killin' them as we 'ates and a-makin' reglar hidols of them as we takes a fancy to. Leastways that's 'ow Brown puts it, as ain't one to run nothink down, without 'avin' of a

good think over it, 'ow it's a-goin' to come out in the long run. But as to sassinashuns, they always works bad, and werry often strikes the 'rong man, like a party as were shot at Cherrin' Cross, thro' bein' mistook for Sir Robert Peel, as 'adn't done nothink to be blowed-up for, as were also like Mr. Percival as were shot a-goin' into the 'Ouse of Commons, as my mother knew 'im well, and a aunt of 'ers 'ad washed the very frill shirt as he were shot in.

There ain't no reason for us to be afeard as any-one will blow up Queen Wictorier, tho' I must say as I do not 'old with the Prince of Wales a-bein' so friendly with them Communists over in France as did ort to jine with all the crown 'eads and swells in the world and call on all respectable people to 'elp and put down all them revolushions all over the world, as only means 'rong and robbery and murder, as we all knows in lookin' back, as my dear mother remembered them a-cuttin' off the 'eads of the King and Queen of France, when she were quite a gal. It's respectable parties a-fallin' out among theirselves as gives all the blaggards a chance. Cos there's lots of good people all about everywhere's, and it's only a few as does the mischief the same as Ireland, as would be right enuf if it wasn't for them demigods. I'm sure if Queen Wictorier were to ask me to give a heye to the Hirish I should not know where to begin, and, though

rude, I should say, 'Do it yourself, marm,' as no doubt would, but for these sassinashuns, 'ave gone among em more, cos if she'd 'ad would 'ave pleased 'em and might 'ave give 'em back some of their churches and 'ave that there Dutch metal figger on 'orseback took away from Dublin Green, as is only a standin' insult to the Hirish; and keeps up bad feelin's, as did ought to be berried long ago, as in course, is kep' alive, as long as the English comes a-crowin' over them as if they wasn't Cristshuns at all, and all the while they pertends to consider as feller subjects. Let 'em be treated fair, and then the Hirish would, no doubt, remember as it ain't the fault of Queen Wictorier nor of any one livin' as Ireland 'ave been treated once that bad, as is changed now, partikler when there's a famine, and then them English as never 'ave 'ad nothink to do with Irish wrongs sends money by the tens of thousin's to relieve distress, as is somethink after all for anyone to do by i's naybours, and didn't ought to be forgotten; and if parties is so quick in rememberin' 'rongs they shouldn't forget all the kindness as 'ave been done to them, as I'm sure no true Hirishman wouldn't, for I've knowed them as the tears would come in their eyes in thankin' me for a bit of wittles and a few old clothes, partikler anythink for the children; as I 'ave seen reglar picters for beauty, specially Mrs. Dwyer's twins, as

'ad eyes as shone like stars and as deep as the blue bag. Ah! poor thing! 'ers was 'ard lines, thro' Dwyer bein' sent out to Injier along with 'is regiment, and 'er not bein' allowed to go thro' bein' married without askin' of the kernel's leave, not as I can see as it's any busyness of 'isn, thro' not bein' 'er father, nor yet 'er granfather, as the parish could 'ave come on, if born in wedlock, to support 'er and the children too. Talk of 'Ome Rulers, I never could make out 'ow that woman kep' 'er bit of a home together, as were a back kitchen that out of repair as I wonders the ole lot was not in the drains or eat up by rats, and yet as clean as a new pin, with two lodgers in the corners as paid the rent, tho' I'm sure 'arf a crown a week were a dead robbery for such a 'ole, and I think as that man must 'ave made three pound a week out of that 'ouse, as he paid forty pound a year for, as were ten rooms in all, and kep' respectable too, and cleaned the doorstep in turns, and 'ave counted nine bells on the door-post myself as you 'ad to call down to the kit-chens, and in course the parlors didn't want none.

I do think as the parish did ought to take up them lodgin' 'ouses for the poor, as would save the rates in the hend, thro' a-many bein' drove into the 'ouse by them 'eavy rents, let alone their 'ealths a-givin' way, thro' 'oles in the floor, as in course brort up the drains as pisoned the hair; tho' I'm sure Mrs.

Dwyer were as 'ealthy a woman as you'd see in a day's march, as the sayin' is, thro' bein' so much in the hair, tho' I 'ave 'eard say as March airs is werry wild, and certingly the March winds is almost urrycans; and, after all, there's nothink like 'ealth, as makes life 'appy anywhere's, tho' millions of money won't bring it to them as 'ave got a secret sorer, nor yet anythink a-rankin' in their constitutions, as may be a-eatin' into their werry 'art's cores all the time, tho' dressed in dimons and feathers, with a smile on their lips, as is often put on when farthest from their thoughts; as I well remembers a lady in the Walworth Road as looked into the Surrey Zoos, as they was called, thro' the wild beasts a-bein' took over there as did used to be showed in the Strand with a beef-eater at the door, as were Exeter Change, and 'ad been a Old Pallis, as was sprung from Queen Lizzybeth's time, thro' bein' one of 'er favy-rites, tho' only a tailor, and come to be a lord, where the helephant were shot, thro' the tooth-ache as drove 'im mad, as is where the Lyseum Theayter stands now, as didn't used to be no thorerfare, nor yet even a street; as now runs up into Long Acre, as in course were fields once the same as Drury Lane and 'Obun, a country road. As I were a-sayin' poor Mrs. Dunn, as lived in Walworth, and did used to keep a ile and colour shop in the Strand, and 'er father before 'er, she remembered Waterloo Bridge

bein' built, likewise Woxall, as you did used to go to from 'Ungerferd stairs in a boat, as there ain't a westment on left, and 'ave even took away the Suspenshun Bridge as the railway 'ave carried all before it, as in course is progress, as there ain't no stoppin', any more than water, as will also find its level; but as to poor Mrs. Dunn, she always did believe as it were the piece of water in them Surrey Zoos as brought on scarlet fever, as she berried twins with, and never 'eld 'er 'ead up agin, and no comfort in Dunn, as 'ad smoked 'isself into a idjot, and only kep' on a-grinnin' when spoke to, as I never did no more arter the time as he called me a "crummy mattern," as I did not consider langwidge for the mother of five, tho' only three survivin' thro' cuttin' of their teeths cross, as is a bad sign in a infant under six months, tho' in a general way 'ealthy. As to poor Mrs. Dunn, it's a downright delusion, 'er a fancyin' as 'er twins was ever thrivin', as was a couple of as rickety boys as ever I see, and as to bein' put down too soon that's all a fickshun, as may be a comfort to a mother's 'art, specially when they're gone, as can't 'ave 'er words disproved, thro' bein' afore fottygrafts was inwented. Ah! poor soul, she'd set at 'er parler window with a smile on 'er lip, yet a tear a-tremblin' in the heye-lead, as was afore the busses took to runnin' down as far as Camberwell Gate, as

is all swep' away now along with the Workus, as is wot we must all come to in time, as is where I went to see Mrs. Dunn more than once, as were 'ard lines to any one as 'ad drove in 'er own shay, not but wot she was comfortable, and were allowed to put on 'er black silk gownd when she come out for the day, thro' 'avin' a good stock of clothes, as nobody wouldn't think to look at 'er, as she were not left comfortable, not as she died there, for 'er 'usban's nephew's son, as 'ad been out in Horsetrailier, he come 'ome and put 'er in a lodgin' in Kennin'ton Lane, as is where she died with twelve shillin's a week, and might have had more, with 'er rent paid, with always a sov'rin or two, and a basket at Christmas, and died at eighty-four. As shows 'ow good deeds will foller you, as were all thro' 'er bein' kind to that man when a motherless boy, as 'is father a bad lot, so took 'im in and give 'im a shake down when he 'adn't a shelter, nor yet a meal, to put in 'is 'ead, as the sayin' is, and went to sea with a few things as she gave 'im, along with a shillin' or two in 'is pocket, as 'adn't much to give, cos it was after Dunn 'ad been sold up in the Strand, as were all thro' 'is idle drunken' ways, as swallowed up every-think, and that young feller's fortun made thro' bein' shipwrecked and werry nigh drowned, as swum to land with sharks arter 'im, but got ashore and found friends as made a man of 'im, and come 'ome

arter thirty years in 'is prime, and never rested till he found out 'is aunt, as he'd rote too agin and agin, and never got 'is letters, as were all Hirish to the backbone, as shows a grateful 'art, as does 'oner to any one, wotever they may be.

I must say as I do consider as respectable parties didn't ort to go makin' no rows in Parlymint, as is all werry well in Horsetrailier and Merryker, where they comes to blows when they meets, but it wouldn't never do to 'ave Gladstin slip off 'is coat and give John Bright a nasty one over the heye, thro' jest a disagreein' about fightin', not but wot he must know as John Bright wouldn't give it 'im back, thro' bein' a Quaker, as don't fight, tho' I see by 'is fottygraft as he 'ave been took since I've been gone, as he've been and cut 'is Quaker clothes, and 'ave come out quite a young swell with 'is scarf-pin, reg'lar worldly-like, as shows as even Quakers can't last for ever; tho' they won't never fight, nor yet take no hoaths, and I've 'eard say as they ain't never christened any more than Jews, nor Turks, and didn't used to wear nothink but broad brim 'ats and gaiters, with no buttons to their clothes, as they did used to call their garb, as I've 'eard a aunt of mine say, as lived in a family in the City, as they took the 'ouse on for a fortnight when they come up to town in the spring, for to attend their meetin's at Exeter 'All, as they calls brotherly love, as shows

all the more 'atred and mallis, and in my opinion a deal wuss than a many places as some say did ort to be put down in this world, not but wot Quakers is kind 'arted the same as Hirish, and will give a 'arty welcome, and a 'arty meal any day, and 'arty meals they do 'ave, as is the fat of the land, and 'ave been knowed to gorge theirselves, as don't consider as over-eatin' ain't no sin, and takes their wax of licker too, and glories in doin' of it, as I don't see no 'oner nor glory to any one over meals, tho' in course we did ought to be thankful, and remember them as is wuss off than us, as would jump at the broken wittles.

I'm sure I'm that thankful as I ain't one for to make laws, nor yet break them neither, as in course them as does must espect to be run in, specially now over in Ireland, as they can lock you up without a word, as all comes of 'avin' a Parlymint as is all talk and row ; and 'owever can they make proper laws when they're a-jawin' away day and night, and then in course 'as no time for nothink else.

I'm sure wot's a-comin' to London I can't think, as the streets is that full of empty cabs, as there ain't no room for nothink else, as kep' me a-waitin' in Piccadilly, jest close to Bond Street, over twenty minutes, as I counted over seventy, as in course must go away when they've set down, but will 'ave to be made all go one way and not turn back, as makes all the confusion, and were the loss of the

London as went down in the Bay of Biscay with all 'ands, poor souls, except a few as took and 'ooked it on the quiet in a boat, as is the only game when you're a wreck, where it's all confusion and terror, as in my opinion is always carelessness somewhere's, and werry often drink, for I'm sure the scores of wessels as I've been aboard I never felt no more danger than in my own four-poster, thro' a-knowin' them crews, as well as captains, and hofficers, as was reg'lar judges for soberness, tho' in course they liked a glass now and then in moderation, the same as a game at cards, or a song, as did used to sound werry cheerful of a night when there wasn't no moon a-playin' on the waters, as the sayin' is, nor yet no pianer playin' on deck, as it did my 'art good for to 'ear sometimes, and some of them young gents a-singin', as was that light 'arted a-goin' 'ome, as well they deserves a 'ollyday, and their mothers, no doubt, as glad to see them as when they was new-born babes, tho' they 'ave grown into whiskers and mustachers, as is in general good boys, tho' in course a little wild arter bein' so long shet up over in Injier, and not seen a white face 'ardly ever; and talk of 'Ome Rule, that would be a nice mess over in Injier now, and in course if we gives it in one place why not in another; and wot we all wants is a good strong 'and over us, 'cos it's all werry fine to talk about liberty, but it wouldn't last

not 'arf a-'our if everybody was to 'ave 'is own way even in England, where the perlice 'as to keep a sharp look out, and can't collar them murderers and burglars as is a-goin' about, as were 'ard lines on that young hofficer at Chatham to be murdered, poor feller, in cold blood in 'is own quarters, as might as well 'ave laid down 'is life for 'is Queen and country, as would be a glorious end, and not to be shot by some wile cowardly waggerbone of a thief, the same as a widder as I see 'ad been robbed by two men as she met in a public'ouse, and serve 'er right for goin' in such company, as shows wot she was, as I ain't no pity for such parties as lowers theirselves, the same as Sarah Giddens, as 'ad 'art complaint come on thro' cold, as she cort thro' a-settin' on a damp seat in the Regency Park, along with a friend, as struck to 'er and ended in dropsy, as is 'ighly dangerous, and did ort to 'ave took more care of 'erself, thro' bein' always delicite, and knowin' of 'er weakness, as she 'adn't no power to struggle agin any more than young Mullins, as were six feet two afore he were eighteen, and in the Life Guards.

I never did see a 'andsomer young feller, as was 'is death, for he never see twenty-one, and I knowed he wouldn't, thro' a-seein' of 'im walkin' about of a cold evenin' in a shell jacket, as certingly did show 'is figger off, but struck to 'is lungs, and

I've 'eard say were almost always in 'ospital from the time as he jined the reggymint, at last carried 'im off under six weeks, as were gallopin' consumption.

As I do believe as them barracks can't be 'olesome places, 'cos I've 'eard of the officers bein' laid up quite as bad as the men; as no doubt is equally careless of theirselves, thro' a-thinkin' as they was strong as 'orses, and turned out poor 'aporths of cheese arter all, as did ort to be a warnin' to young people to take care of theirselves, 'cos tho' they may not all die, yet lays the seeds of bad 'ealth, as undermines the constitushun in the long run.

Brown he's that give to charfin' me, a-sayin' as I fancies as I were born to set the world right, not as I pertends to that, tho' I must say as more than 'arf the misery as I've seen in this life 'ave been brort on parties by their own faults, as won't take no warnin' nor yet advice, tho' I'm sure I ain't one as don't make mistakes, the same as I did last week in goin' by the underground at Moorgate Street for to go to 'Ammersmith to see a niece of Brown's as ain't well; and I must say as there's a-somethink in that underground as affects my 'ead, and so I were a-tellin' a lady as set oppposite me in widder's weeds, with a wail down, as I kep' a-lookin' at, till at last I says :

"You'll excuse me, mum, but if I might make that bold, I thought as you'd left 'em off."

She says, "Oh dear no; but I soon shall, for they so soon gets dirty, as am obliged to turn 'em, as runs into money."

"Well," I says, "there ain't many at 'ome with you now."

She says, "Ush! then you knows me?"

"Well," I says, "if I might persume, I should like to know 'ow you give em all the slip," 'cos I knowed as she were Queen Wictorier, tho' incog., as they calls 'er on the Continent, and as we know as she have been often and often likewise in the 'Ighlands.

She says, "Beatrice were a-comin' to town for to 'ave a lesson on the sewin'-machine, as she takes along with 'er sister-in-law at Marlburrr 'Ouse, as 'ave got six in constant use, so I come with 'er on the quiet, for really things is such a price as I can't get a plain dress made under ten shillin's without trimmin's.

"Ah!" I says, "yes, and often 'ave it spilte into the bargin like my poil de shoe, as I can't set down in."

"Yes," she says, "and I wants a penny paper, for I'm all of a fidget about things in general, 'cos I can't get nothink out of Gladstin since he made that slip, as I've 'ad to take notice on, 'cos my son didn't ought to give an old gent more than one B

and S a-comin' away arter dinner, and them 'Ome Rulers a-makin' that row, as I shall 'ave to step in some night and dissolve the lot; for as to the Hirish, I don't believe as there's any 'arm in 'em, for I shan't never forget when I went over there 'ow they shouted."

I says, "It's my opinion as it's werry like children, as often 'as their tempers spilte thro' bein' too much noticed."

"Right you are," says she. "Yes, that's wot I always will 'ave about 'em; and it often appears as they'd be quite good if left to amuse theirselves and not be interfered with, the same as I told the Duchess of Edinburrer, I've knowed many a child 'ave a tumble and 'urt itself, as wouldn't never 'ave cried if somebody a-standin' by 'adn't took to pityin' on it, and would take it up and begin to coax it, then the child is sure to think 'isself dreadful 'urt and begins to cry."

"Yes," I says, "and wot's more, I do believe it's the same with the Hirish, as it were all put in their 'eads by that old Gladstin."

I see I were a-treadin' on delicit ground, for she give me a wink; so I says, "I'm sure, your Maj——."

"Ush!" she says; "keep it dark, cos there's old Gladstin in the next compartment, as 'ave dyed 'is 'air, with a comforter all round 'is mouth, a-readin'

of a pamphlet and a-ritin' in a note book, and a-talkin' away all the time."

So I drops my voice, and says, "If he 'adn't come in, them Bores over in Africker wouldn't never 'ave broke out."

So she give a sigh, and says, in a whisper, "Bores, indeed! But I'm used to them."

"Oh," Isays, "so I should think, in readin' of your royal life; leastways my good gentleman 'ave read me bits on it, as I considers werry interestin', thro' 'avin' dipped into it, leastways that part about the 'Ighlands, as I've been to myself, thro' Cook's excursions, as I looks on as a father all over the world, as sich a man for peace-makin', as he might be a 'Ome Ruler for Ireland, for he could take Cardinal Mannin' and the Archbishop of Canterbury, along with Spurgin and Dr. Pusey, all to Rome together to see the Pope, jest like a 'appy family, as is wot I likes to see, and no doubt give the Pope great pleasure to see 'em all."

I think as Queen Victorier were a-noddin'; but she woke up at Baker Street, and says, "Ah! Madame Tussor's! I always feels quite at 'ome there."

I says, "And well you may, for a more lovely group I never did see as you makes, along with your young family."

Jest then there was a row in the next compart-

ment, so I turns my 'ead, and there was old Baconsfield, dressed like a workin' man, a-'wirin'-in to old Gladstin, as was 'avin' words about which one on 'em should be fust in the Chamber of 'Orrors. Jest as we was a-comin' out of a tunnel, there we sees the Hempress of Hostrier, a-follerin' the 'ounds all over the place, and Queen Wictorier, she took and dropped 'er wail; so I thinks to myself, "You won't be a-droppin'-in no more at Winsor Castle for pot-luck of a Sunday, as got the cold shoulder last time, and would 'ave been 'arf-starved but for the Station Master 'avin' of a 'ot dinner for 'is family on a Sunday, and were no doubt 'appy for to give the Hempress a cut off the jinte, as is used to rough it across country.

Queen Wictorier give me a nudge, and I 'eard Gladstin say to Bacinsfield as he wished as he'd change places with 'im, as said, "Oh! dear, no! ketch me at it! You got me out of my corner, and slipped in yourself, as I were glad to give up thro' not a-likin' to set a-facin' the injin, as always smothers you in smoke, and so now you've got the place you can keep it, and I wish you joy on it."

I could see as Queen Wictorier were a-listenin' with all 'er royal ears all the time, a-larfin' in 'er royal sleeves; so I didn't take no notice, but says to 'er, "I do 'ope as your royal youngest is better—I means, in course, Leepold."

"I'm goin' to see 'im," she says, "as 'ave a nasty cold a-'angin' about 'im, and so did my darlin' Connort, last week."

"Ah!" I says, "and well you may be proud on 'im, as is one of the 'ansomest young chaps as ever I see down at Dover, many years ago, and as 'ansome as ever now as he 'ave took to 'isself a wife; but," I says, "it's singler as Leepold should be a-livin' down there, where 'is godpa, leastways 'is great-uncle, lived when I were quite a little gal, as they do say did used to sell 'is vegetables, and no doubt valued everythink as was about the place, thro' bein' there in 'is 'appy days, when fust married to Princess Charlotte, as would 'ave been your Grashus Majesty if she 'adn't died with 'er fust, as were a boy, but would be a elderly lady now, tho' cut off in early bloom, and always werry pale, with 'er eye injured thro' small-pox, as I do consider 'noculation were a bad thing, tho' some says as waccination is as bad, thro' not a-comin' like new milk from the cow, but a-goin' thro' a many children, as sometimes does 'arm. I must say as it don't seem nat'ral to stop diseases as is no doubt meant to thin us down."

"Why," says a voice close to me, "if you ain't a second Mrs. Besint."

I says, "I thank you not to mix me up with sich parties, as am a respectable married 'ooman;

but I says, "Surely you're Bradawl." I says, "Don't you address me," cos I were afraid as he'd see Queen Wictorier as he'd take and swear 'er life away as soon as look at 'er, only I felt more 'appy when I see John Bright eatin' of pennywinkles out of 'is 'at, as he'd been and borrowed a pin of Queen Wictorier, as said as she were sorry as she'd nothing but black ones, as might disagree with 'im if he should 'appen to swaller it with a sudden jerk, as the railway will give, or even a fit of corfin', as I always gets at Baker Street, tho' Bright said as he were a-goin' to the Aquarium to 'old a Cab'net Council over Zazel as 'ad been and overshot 'erself, "As may be a lesson to all them as over-reaches themselves," says Baconsfield a-givin' Gladstin' a look as only put 'is 'and to 'is 'ead a-sayin', "Oh! that fearful slip," and then took and muttered about that beastly port.

They was all a-noddin' along, when I says to Queen Wictorier, "I'm glad as your dear gal ain't a-goin' to be throwed away among them Swedes, as is a turnip-brained lot, and werry much out of the way, and terrible cold in winter; not but wot she's used to that, 'cos, in course, Balmoral must be pretty cool in May, and not werry warm when you leaves it."

I says at last, "I do 'ope as they ain't took me too far."

Says Gladstin, "You'd better look sharp and get out."

Says Baconsfield, "Allow me to give you a arm."

I says, "Look arter 'er most grashus, as 'ave come with no sweet."

"Come, none of this, wake up," says Gladstin, "we ain't goin' to be 'ere all night."

I says, "'Ands off." I says, "You ain't a-goin' to insult me, tho' you have got in again."

"Don't be foolish, mother," says a voice as I could indemnify, and a light were 'eld in my face. So, I says, "If you're burglars, I ain't got more than seven and sixpence about me, and a silver watch, as take in welcome, but ill-use nor yet murder me."

"We shan't murder you, old gal, but come out."

I looks up, and if I wasn't in the railway carridge with two porters a-'angin' over me, with a bulls-eye turned full in my face. So I says,—

"Mussy on us, wherever am I?"

"Why, Richmond, to be sure," says one of the men.

"But I want 'Ammersmith," I says.

"Then you did 'ort 'ave got out there then."

"Why," I says, "wot's o'clock?"

"Why, jest eleven," says the man.

“Why,” I says, “I got in this train at ’Aldgate for ’Ammersmith just on six o’clock.”

“Well then,” he says, “you’ve been and done the journey backards and forards three times, as must ’ave been asleep.”

I says, “Never; for I was a-talkin’ to Queen Wictorier.”

They both bust out a-larfin, and says, “You’d better look slippy, or you’ll lose the last train, as only runs to Waterloo.”

It was as much as ever I could do to ketch that train, as them two men ’urried me into, and I don’t know wot time I got to Waterloo, as ’ad to take a cab into the Strand, and, as luck would ’ave it, cort a Bow and Stratford, as is my reglar busses, and knows me like a mother, as is the wust of that underground, as seems to draw you to sleep like charcoal, as ’ave been the death of a many afore now, as was the fav’rite way with the French of puttin’ of theirselves out of their misery, tho’ I must say as I enjoyed that wision as I ’ad, thro’ it a seemin’ like ’uman natur, as is why charcoal is that easy death. Not as I ’olds with sleepin’ in a train as ’ave led to robbery, and sometimes death, thro’ parties a-wakin’ up in a fright and a-steppin’ out whilst in motion.

So I felt thankful when safe at ’ome agin, and Brown a-doin’ of ’is pipe as said,—

"I tell you wot it is, old lady, you'd better stop at 'ome or you'll be missin' your tip some'ow."

I says, "Mr. Brown, I'd thank you not to let me 'ave none of your tips, as am 'arf dead with faintness tho' not 'ungry, and can only fancy a crust of bread and a little something 'ot, for I've got the creeps all up my back and shan't get no rest all night."

"Why, if you've been snorin' away in a railway over three 'ours, no wonder as you've cooked your night's rest, but a little of strong and sweet will be the best nightcap, or," he says, "I tell you what, as you seems to 'ave got a chill, I'll brew some egg-flip, and that, with a bit of dry toast, will warm the cockles of your 'art."

So he set to work with the flip, while I toasted the bread, as warmed my feet, and I must say as that flip were as soft as cream, and reg'lar warmed me thro' to the marrer bones, and I went to bed with no more wisions, as I were sorry for, as I should like to 'ave 'eard wot Queen Wictorier were a-goin' to say, as I really do believe, for all Brown's jeers, must 'ave been in that train, as preaps likes goin' about on the strict Q. T., as the sayin' is. Whether it were the flip, or the turn as that railway give, my night's rest were that broke as I kep' on a-thinkin' over 'ow Queen Wictorier 'ad spoke, as I do pity with all my 'art, partikler now as I knows

'ow she must be worked, with no one to 'elp 'er, thro' them 'eaps of letters, and a telegraph a-goin' from mornin' till night, as is work for a gallus slave more than a lady, to be up and at work by eight o'clock, as I've knowed 'em as let lodgin's never down afore nine; but you see that's where it is, some only lives for dooty, whilst others is on dooty all the time as they lives, as is like the great Dook of Wellin'ton, as never wouldn't allow no one ever to do 'is dooty, the same as Lord Nelson, as could put 'is telescope to 'is blind eye and see jest as well when he chose, and waive 'is cock 'at with 'is harm off; not as ever I did 'old with 'im and that Lady 'Amilton, as my dear mother remembered well, a-livin' in a 'ouse with a Mrs. Powell, as wasn't far off Chandos Street, as is where my own gran'father were in busyness, and my mother when a gal did used to go and 'elp in the 'ouse, with a party as lived next door to Lady 'Amilton in the rules of the Bench, as always said as that dear little 'Oratier were never nothink more to Lady 'Amilton but a little gal as she adopted from a party as washed for 'er, and I 'ave 'eard parties say, as lived over in Naples years and years ago, as Lady 'Amilton only got 'er desserts in bein' left out in the cold in 'er old age, as 'ad been a beauty in 'er day, tho' no great shakes. But, law, them's old-fashioned notions, and character don't go for nothink

now-a-days, as any brazen 'ussey can get spoke on with respect, and called a noble creetur in death, as deserves a shorter, tho' not a sweeter name. I 'ates callin' wice wirtue and wice worser, as the sayin' is. In course, if parties sees the horrors of their ways, and turns over a new leaf, so much the better for 'em and for others too ; but don't let 'em give theirselves no hairs, and try to look down upon others, as I considers himpidence, for I well remembers a party as were that bold and for'ard a young minx as you'd see in a day's walk. I never knowed nothink more on 'er than 'er fater 'eelein' Brown's boots, as the gal brort 'ome, and 'ad eightpence to pay for 'em. She 'adn't got much of a 'ome, and as to 'Ome Rule, she didn't know the meanin' of the word, I should say. I 'eard as she did^d used to go on the stage pantermine, and get five shillin's a week to be tied up agin a gas-pipe, with only 'er 'ead a-showin', as she kep' on a-turnin' constant for a fairy, as were called the Abode of Bliss. I never see it, but there was plenty of others as did, and did used to tell me about it, and arter that I've seen the gal in a shay a-drivin' down the Bow Road with a baker's journeyman, as I knowed were a married man, and so did she, for that matter.

Well, I lost sight of 'er for years, but 'eard as she'd got married, and 'ad been set up in a publik-ouse. I says, " Did she marry a publikin ? "

“ Oh, no,” says Mrs. Dipley ; “ she were set up in the publik line, and took and married the pot-boy in the name of Porter, leastways he were growed up, tho’ younger than ’er by many years. She’d got on wonderful arter ’er marridge, and ’ad bought a large busyness, and did up the ’ouse with plate glass and goldin lamps in front, and as to the bar, that were a downright pallis, with lookin’-glasses every way, and ’er bein’ in the bar every hevenin’, with dimons in ’er ears, and ’im a-lookin’ arter the ’ouse all round, and takin’ ’is part in servin’ customers, as there was a reg’lar run on their corjials, specially gin and noyeau, as drunk werry creamy, I must say. Not as ever I was in the ’ouse but once, and then didn’t take no notice on ’er, as is agin my principles ; but couldn’t ’elp a-larfin’ in my sleeves to ’ear ’er make a fool of ’erself, puttin’ on sich hairs and graces, as never were good-lookin’, and now gettin’ on, and that jealous of ’er ’usban’ as he dursn’t look at any one, let alone speak ; but I give ’im a nod, as I’d knowed ’im from a boy, as poor feller ’is mother’s end were the work’us, not as that were ’is fault, but didn’t ought to say as he’d been in the harmy, as he never were beyond the blackin’ brigade. I didn’t speak to ’im, for tho’ it were no busyness of mine, I don’t never fancy a young man as marries either a old ’oman, nor one as ain’t got no character to spare ; but in course it

were a rise for 'im. Well jest as I were a-takin' of my noyeau, along with Mrs. Dewsby, as I'd met permiscus, a young 'oman come in along with a young feller, as both on 'em shook 'ands with Porter in 'avin' of a pint of ale, and seemed werry decent in their ways, and she says to this party at the bar, "Good evenin', Mrs. Porter."

She says, "I do not know you, as I considers it a great liberty in you addressin' me, and for my 'usban' to speak to you, partikler in company with a sojer, as don't look well in any young 'oman."

So the young 'oman says, "You did ought to be a good judge in them matters; but I am Polly Mitton, where your 'usban' did used to lodge when I were quite a little gal, as I remembers well you a-callin' for 'im, and my mother makin' you walk your chawks all of a 'urry; and as to the sojer, he's my own brother," and out of the place they both walked.

Well, I didn't think no more of them Porters, and never should 'ave thort on 'em no more, tho' I might 'ave done so in Horsetrailier, as is quite a reg'lar thing for a young feller to go and live in some of them low 'oles, as they calls 'otels, and then thro' bein' in debt and reg'lar 'ard up, take and marry the party as keeps it, so as to settle old scores, tho' generally old enuf to be 'is mother.

When we got back to London I see in passin' by Mrs. Porter's pub as it were changed proprietors,

so thort as she'd been and made a fortun, and retired, but no. I 'eard as she'd took a grand refreshment saloon down Poplar way, and 'ad growed the size of a 'ouse, as they did say come on thro' makin' too free with gin and noyeau. I never see 'er tho' I did ketch sight of 'im drivin' a pheaton one Sunday, out by Forest Gate. She were not with 'im. I 'ardly knowed 'im, bein' such a size, and I see the party with 'im were not werry young, and yaller 'air, as were all I did notice, and the week arter I see that same party come out of a simmy detached willer, jest oppersite us, as I see goods was a-movin' into. I were too much took up with gettin' my own place straight to take notice of wot anyone else were a-doin'

Well, we'd jest got to rights and the days was a-gettin' out that nicely as made it quite light, up to nearly six, when one evenin' the gal come and said, jest as I'd finished tea, as I'd took in my front kitchen, thro' Brown bein' out, as there were a lady in the parlour as wished to see me. So I urries up, not a-likin' strangers showed in, specially 'tween the lights, tho' there ain't nothink of value left about, tho' I've known 'em pocket a plated salt-spoon afore now. When I got to the room there were a lusty fieldmale a-settin' with 'er wail down, as were quite unbeknown to me; so I said to the gal, "Get a spill and light the gas."

“Oblige me by not ’avin’ a light jest yet,” says the wisitor, “I’m come to ask a favour as requires darkness.”

I says, “Oh! indeed, then I ’opes as it will soon be granted.”

She says, “Not very long,” fust; and then she says, “you don’t remember me.”

I says, “I ’aven’t a consumption who you are in the dusk.”

She says, “I’m Mrs. Porter, as kep’ the ‘Goldin Grapes.’”

I says, “Oh! indeed,” quite cool like, for I never did want to know that party.

She says, “Don’t be cool to me for I’m in dreadful trouble,” and she bust out a-cryin’.

I says, “’Ow can I ’elp you?”

She says, “Oh! Porter’s been and treated me like a blackguard, as he is, as I took out of the streets without a shoe to ’is foot, and now to turn on me like this.”

I says, “Wotever as he done?”

“Oh!” she says, “he’s took a ’ouse opersite ’ere, as he’s been and furnished for a party.”

I says, “In yaller ’air?”

“Yes,” she says. “Oh!” she says, a-lookin’ out of the winder, “there he is a-goin’ in;” and afore I could speak or think, she were out of my

room, down our steps, and across the road in a jiffy, as the sayin' is.

I couldn't 'ave believed as sich a full figger could 'ave moved like that rapid; so I 'urries arter 'er, a-thinkin' she were a-goin' to commit murder or somethink, and come up with 'er inside the gardin of the oppersite willer, jest as she were a-goin' to 'ammer at the door, as only bein' that short in 'er breath stopped 'er reachin', and down she fell on the steps in a dead faint. Wot to do I didn't know, when the door were opened, and out come Porter, as 'elped 'er up, a-sayin', "A old fool, wot brort 'er here? Why, it's Mrs. Brown! Surely you 'aven't never been a-makin' mischief atween us?"

I says, "Me! Why, I 'ardly knows you, specially grown that stout as you are."

He says, "I'm in a reg'lar fix. I don't know what to do. I can't take 'er in 'ere."

"Well," I says, "then 'elp 'er back into my place." And as she were jest a-comin'-to, we managed to get 'er over into my front kitchen, as there wasn't no steps to go up into it. She were still dreadful low and fainty, as a drop of brandy soon brort 'er to; but she no sooner set up and see 'er 'usban' than she was a-beginnin' to go on about 'im 'avin' a second 'ome; so I sees it must be put a stop to, and that soon.

So I says, "Mrs. Porter, as is your name, you're in my 'ouse, and if you can't keep yourself quiet, you'll soon be out of it, and in a cab, too, for I won't 'ave no rows 'ere."

My words seemed for to wake 'er up like, and she says, "It's 'ard to bear, and after all as I've done for im."

"Well," he says, "you've done a deal for me, but you won't trust me, tho' I promised I'd esplain all when I'd squared matters."

"Who is this party as you've took a 'ouse and bort furniture for?" says she.

"Well," he says, "she's my 'arf-sister, as is my elder, and married well out in Canada, as 'er 'usban' is a-comin' 'ome every day, and that's who the 'ouse is for."

"Then why not 'ave said so?" I says, "and not make a mist'ry where there ain't none needed?"

"Well," he says, "as my wife won't believe me"—for Mrs. Porter set there a-sheddin' tears and shakin' 'er 'ead—"it's for 'er sake as I've kep' things dark, cos when I 'eard as my sister were a-comin' 'ome, I knowed she wouldn't never speak to my wife; so when we met never told 'er I was married—not when I took 'er down on Sunday to see 'er 'usban's mother down at Forest Gate, nor yet when she took this 'ouse—not till yesterday evenin'; and when I did say as I was married,

and who was my wife, she told me straight as nothink on earth should ever make 'er notice sich a person ; and I come agin this evenin' to see if I could talk 'er over ; and it's well as you didn't fall in with 'er, or there'd 'ave been a shine."

That Mrs. Porter, she didn't take on not as much as I expected, tho' she shed tears in sayin' as it were 'ard, as all the time as she'd lived respectable shouldn't make up for the follies of 'er youth. So she went with Porter in a cab, a-thankin' me for lettin' 'er come into my place.

I says, "It don't make no difference to me wot you 'ave been or wot you are ; but in course if I 'ad dorders as I were a-tryin' to bring up straight, I should be werry partikler about them as I let 'em mix with, cos, remember, esample is 'arf the battle ; but," I says, "don't say no more about it, only don't be too down upon others, and then pre'aps parties may leave off a-talkin' about you." And so we parted, and I don't think as 'er sister-in-law ever looked over it, for I never see Porter there no more, as did 'im credit, cos in course if he'd married the woman he did ought to stick to 'er, as is my opinion ; not but wot 'olds as parties as 'ave lost their characters didn't ought to grumble if them as 'ave kep' theirselves respectable gives them the cold shoulder, as the sayin' is. Not but wot I'd rather a man married anyone than 'is wife's

dorter, as did seem a outrage, but ain't thort nothink on in Horsetrailier ; not as ever I 'ad anythink to do with the parties when once I found it out, cos I don't fancy sich ways myself, as ain't common decency, but in course in them colonies they're a wild lot, specially in the bush, where there ain't no reg'lar 'omes, and they lives without rule, 'ome, or other ways ; tho' I must say as the Hirish is all on the square, and is that decent and well be'aved gals as is a esample all over the place, tho' in course some on 'em 'ave disgraced themselves in marryin' them 'eathen Chinees, as ain't a lorful marridge thro' never 'avin' been christened, cos in course it did all to be done reg'lar and in order.

" But," as I were a-sayin' to Brown, " suppose the Hirish 'ad their own Parlymint, without no Speaker for to keep 'em in order, why, they'd all want to be speakin' at one time, and never do nothink but jaw away wuss than they do in our Parlymint, and as to makin' laws, why, they'd never 'ave the patience to listen to one another, but all speak at once, thro' bein' that excitable, as it's a word and a blow, and the blow comes fust, the same as I've 'eard they did used to go on at some of them fairs, as they'd 'ave a jolly row as they all enjoyed and none the wuss friends, as ain't busyness for all that, as only shows as the Hirish wouldn't

care who did the work so as they were left to go on their own way, as is wot makes 'em take life so easy, and not be a-grislin' and a-stewin' over things as they can't 'elp. And there were Mrs. O'Farrell, as were a widder well to do in the world, as 'ad a 'ansom' 'ouse over by the London Fields, as were furnished like any Lord Mare's, as is why it were called the Mansion 'Ouse, as 'ad 'er carridge and plate, and all manner, thro' O'Farrell a-dyin' that rich as were in the brick-field line, as is a werry unpleasant smell to be near when the wind sets that way, tho' loads of money to be made at it, the same as a dust 'eap, as I remembers well at King's Cross, close by the Smallpox 'Ospital, as is now built over with the Great Northern Railway, and were moved up to 'Amstead, as proved fatal to a many, as was carried up to the 'Ouse of Lords, as werry soon put the kibosh on it, the same as that waggerbone Orton a-darin' to give any more trouble as I'd keep on bread-and-water for the rest of 'is nat'ral life, as 'ave been to the place in Horsetrailier, as is called Wagga Wagga, and a dirty 'ole of a shop, and is called Tichbung 'Ouse, as is where he were a butcher, as everyone there larfed at the ideer of 'im bein' a gentleman, as only shows wot a deal of trouble a waggerbone like that can give, as I only wishes he may be kep' at 'ard labour for the end of 'is time, as 'angin's too good for 'im, in my

opinion ; and 'owever the 'Ouse of Lords ever 'ad the patience to set and listen to that rubbish about Merrykin law, as if we wanted them to teach us our laws, as is like their cheek. Let them have their Lynch laws if they likes, as I considers a lawless set all round, but not take the liberty to interfere about our convix, as we still punishes for false hoaths, tho' in course they wouldn't be thort no 'arm by many Merrykins, as is the same as Bradlor about swearin' ; and why ever that feller ain't called Orton I can't think, as is the name as the jury give 'im, and might 'ave been proved easy by bringin' a party from 'Obart Town, as 'ad known 'im when he fust come out there with some ponies in that name, but that would 'ave cut it all short, and there wouldn't 'ave been no nice pickin's for nobody. But there's an end of the feller, as let's 'ope won't get out a 'our before 'is time, and did ort to 'ave a taste of the cart's-tail, jest to put 'im in mind not to try it on more with 'is wile purjerin' ways. Not as I blames the wile wretch so much as them as put 'im up to it, as they told us over there were at fust a joke, when the old lady begun a-advertisin' a reward for 'er son, as parties said to 'im, " Why, butcher, you might be the man, why ever don't you 'ave a shy for it ;" and then there was artful dodgers as come along a-seein' as there might be money a-'angin' to it, and so got it all up, as must be

fools, cos if he was let out of prison to-morrer he wouldn't be no nearer to bein' the right man ; so them parties as 'ave dropped their money over 'is preshus bonds won't never get a fardin' out of 'em, and serve 'em right too.

There's one thing very certain, leastways so Brown says, that we shall 'ave to alter that Parlymint of ours, as 'ave been a-wastin' their time over 'Ome Rule in Ireland, and a-neglectin' our 'Ome Rule at 'ome, there'll be a end of the seshun, with no new taxes put on nor yet railroads made, nor our own smoke consumed, nor yet cattle diseases done away, nor tramways laid down, nor yet no fisheries bill, with soles sich a price as you can't get 'em for love nor money werry soon, as is bein' sold by the pound instead of the pair ; and why ever we don't 'ave more fish from Ireland I can't think, as is water all round, with railroads to bring it quite fresh, as some fish is better for bein' kep', specially turbot, as gets solid.

I'm sure 'owever poor people is to live I can't think, and I don't mean the werry poor, but parties as 'ave only got small incums as they can't make better no 'ow, as is the real poor arter all, a struggling to keep up a appearance, not as I pities parties as is tryin' to do the sham, and cut a figger as they ain't no right to, the same as young Wells, as married Susan Green, as were a clerk with a

'undred and fifty a-year, and 'er not a shillin' but wot she stood up in, thro' 'er father bein' in the Excise, with two 'underd a-year and nine in fam'ly, so 'ow could he give 'er more than 'er clothes, as it were a struggle to get them together, as Brown give 'er a fiver thro' bein' 'er godfather, and must take a willer up Kentish Town way, when two rooms was about their size, as he furnished on the credit system, with a bill of sale 'angin' over 'is 'ead if seven pounds ten weren't paid up every month, as in course couldn't be done not the fust quarter, and so run into a second, as was sold up afore Mickle-mus, and everythin' took out of the 'ouse as clean as a whistle, as the sayin' is, and where she'd 'ave went to but the workus when 'er baby come along, if she 'adn't 'ad a old aunt to go to, as took 'er in; and when I see 'er when we come 'ome she were a ghost, and that child a-pinin', as picked up slowly under Swiss milk and biskit powder, and will do now.

But sich foolishness parties like that a-talkin' about bein' ladies and gentlemen, as is nothin' but shams, and should live like workin' people, not but wot every one did ort to try to be respectable, but not a-sailin' under false colours, as is wot I calls that Cheap Jack furniture, as gets shabby in no time, and them cheap tapistery carpets as the pattern treads off; and as to some of them reps, why, they're downright rubbish, and looks like it from the fust,

and drops into 'oles as if they'd been cut with a knife.

The parties as is to blame is them as buys sich things, as 'ad better 'ave deal chairs and tables over a bit of good drugget, and, above all, keep the boards clean, so as not to be ashamed on 'em if they should be seen. I do think as the world is made up of nothink but shams now-a-days from the 'ighest to the lowest, not as I means real swells, but them as is a-apin' their betters, and a-livin' by their wits, as only means robbin' of trades-people; and I'm sure as that employin' of young women so much does 'arm, as you sees of a Satter-day with little bags in their 'ands, a-goin' out till Monday, jest for all the world like young men, as reg'lar spiles 'em for stoppin' at 'ome, as can't never make good wives or mothers thro' never bein' 'appy out of the streets, as 'ome is woman's spear of haction, as is 'er real 'Ome Rule, while 'er 'usban' is a-workin' 'ard to get the bread and cheese.

Not as I'm one to speak about any young person exertin' 'erself respectable, but they did ought to think more of stoppin' at 'ome. I means them as is goin' to be poor men's wives, as must be toil and trouble, as we're all born to, tho', in course, a good woman is best rewarded when she sees 'er 'usban' and children 'appy all round 'er.

Talk of wild beasts and savidges bein' destroyed, why, they're angels compared with them devils of Nileists in Roosher, as could be that cruel as to go and kill anythink, let alone a feller creetur, as they did that Hemperor, as if he'd been a dog run over one would have felt for, and it's enuf to make one ashamed of bein' a 'uman bein', not as Rooshins is much better than savidges, I've 'eard say, as I do 'ope this ere new Hemperor will take and give it 'em 'otter than hever, as is the way for to stamp 'em out, like the colerader beadle, as only dewours pertaters. It's enuf to make all the kings and princes in the world club together and reg'lar smash all them secret societies, 'cos it's all werry well to say as they're 'armless, like the Freemasons, as my poor dear father belonged to for years, and my dear mother well remembered 'im a-comin' 'ome the night as he were made, as quite set 'er agin Masons, as is a secret society, as is all 'armless enuf so long as they're in good 'ands, as a-many on 'em is lords and dukes, but if a bad lot were to get in they might take and turn themselves into a reg'lar conspiracy and blow up everythink, as in course they couldn't blow up Queen Wictorier as long as the Prince of Wales is Grand Master, as in course wouldn't set by with all them lovely things on and let them plan 'ow they was to blow up Winsor Castle, and collar all that

plate, as I see once myself with my own eyes, as I considers it were downright foolishness a-puttin' in the papers wot it were worth, with all them burglars a-goin' about, as might get in there and collar the lot, as in course it ain't no consequence to Queen Wictorier about its value, but would give 'er a orful turn if them burglars was to get into 'er bedroom arter the plate basket, as she no doubt always 'ave took there, along with 'er keys, the last thing.

Talking of turns, they may well say as she 'eard with grief and 'orror about that Hemperor of Roosher bein' murdered like that, as I were a-dreamin' about all Sunday night, as Joe Barnes made me that wild a-sayin' as he didn't ought to 'ave been a tyrant.

I says, "That's all rubbish, Joe, my good feller, cos if you comes to that, the perliceman is a tyrant to the burglar he collars, and so is Jack Ketch to the waggerbone as he's 'angin'; and, accordin' to John Bright, every one is a tyrant as carries out the law." Jest the same as Gladstin is a tyrant over the Hirish jest now; and let anyone go to try and upset old Gravy in Paris, and see 'ow preshus soon he'd be a tyrant; the Hemperor of Roosher were a-rulin' according to the law of his country quite as much as ever that there President of Yankeeland is, and see 'ow preshus quick they

was down on them Southerners, as they 'ad their work cut out to put down, and that there play-actin' waggerbone called 'isself a friend of freedom when he took and showed his free ways in killin' Lincoln in the theayter of a Good Friday, as I never 'eard of any one as is decent agoin' to on such a day.

It's all werry well a-talkin' about tyrants, but, as Brown were a-sayin', if you wants the wust sort of tyrants you'd better look at the French Revolution, as was all tyrants to one another; and I'm sure our beadle did used to be frightful 'ard on the charity boys, both in church and out at Spitalfields, the same as a master of a workus may be; but there's good beadles and kind-'arted masters of workuses, as it ain't their faults as they've got to look arter unruly boys and able-bodied paupers; but as to doin' away with paupers, you never will, tho' in course them ladies means well, as goes on a-fidgetin' about the poor, as all of 'em as is decent would only be too glad to work if they 'ad the strength, and could get it to do; but 'owever can a poor woman with, 'er family comin' on, be at work, unless she neglects 'er 'ome rule, as did ort to be lookin' arter 'er 'usban's dinner, and keepin' of the place clean, and tidyin'-up the children, and mendin' and washin' the clothes—that's 'Ome Rule, as is a wife's dooty; but as to them able-bodied fieldmales as goes into the 'ouse, we all know wot

they in gen'ral are, as ain't worth thinkin' about, and did ort to be kep' by theirselves, and not be let work in the same place as the young 'uns, as they're a reg'lar contamination. Workuses did ort to be workuses, where them as could work and won't work did ort to be made to work. But, Lor' bless me ! I wonder whoever is a-goin' to set this world right, for tryin' to do so is jest like washin' your 'ands, as is as dirty as ever in 'arf a 'our ; not but you must keep on tryin' to set parties right, jest the same as you must wash your 'ands over and over agin. It's 'ard lines for them as 'ave got to work, tho' preaps they're 'appiest arter all, cos life can't be worry gay, not even in a pallis, if you 'as to set with your 'ands afore you, a-lookin' out of the winder all day, as may be improvin' the shinin' 'our, but wouldn't soot me, not even if I was a little busy bee.

But I'm sure as a more 'ard-workin' woman than Mrs. Melton never stood at the wash-tub, as 'ad a customer out at Stepney, tho' livin' at Shepherd's Bush, as she didn't like to give up thro' their a-payin' 'er bus fare to take the things 'ome, as she often did of a Friday nite, and always outside, thro' enjoyin' of the fresh hair, as were nearly 'er death, thro' over-reachin' of 'erself in 'andin' down the basket from the top of the bus, as the conductor stood ready to take, but bein' a stranger, 'adn't no

ideer of the weight, as she kep' on a-'oldin' by the other 'andle. He says to 'er, "Let go." She says, "The basket will slip," and kep' a-'oldin' it till thro' bein' that 'eavy it pulled 'er off the bus, as would 'ave broke 'er neck if she 'adn't 'ave fell into the basket, as broke 'er fall thro' the conductor bein' under it, as were picked up 'arf-stunned and werry nigh flattened as well, under sich a load, as Mrs. Melton were over eighteen stun, and the basket were bed-linen, as ways 'eavy, as weren't as bad quite as 'er two dorters a-carryin' of a basket of fine things atween 'em up agin Nottin' 'Ill Gate, as a blind man without no dog come along, and reg'lar walked into that basket, and sent one of them gals into a hairy, and the other a-rollin' in the kennel; and as to the fine things, they was some on 'em blowed down as far as Addison Road, all thro' the slush arter a thaw; and I must say as I don't think as them blind parties did ort to be allowed to go about like that, as one came full butt agin me in the Whitechapel Road, with feet like reg'lar beadle-crushers, as the sayin' is, and come with both on 'em right atop of my new boots, as reg'lar scraped the kid off like a knife. I thort I should 'ave died on the flagstones, and that blind beggar only says to me, "Are you blind too?" as were all werry well to wander about Bethnil Green when it were all fields, as turned out to be a

nobleman in the hend; but that were when Queen Lizzybeth were on the throne, as 'ad done 'im out of all 'is money and lands, as is werry different to Queen Wictorier, as if she did get the blind side of anyone, would be to lend 'em a 'elpin' 'and, as I'm sure would lose 'er temper the same as me under 'is feet, as I don't believe as a angel wouldn't be ruffled with all 'is corns trod on at once, as goes to the werry quick, as turned me that dead faint as if it 'adn't been as I backed in at the door of wine waults, and staggered to a bench, I must 'ave went off, as the party at the bar were werry kind in givin' of me some 'ot mulled port, as brort the life into me, for my 'art and my corns was both a-throbbin' that wiolent as I couldn't get my breath for ever so long.

I'm glad as there's goin' to be new 'Ome Rules about them busses bein' made larger, as will be a reg'lar mussy, for I never can't get into one as ain't nearly empty, and then only thro' parties inside a-lendin' me a 'elpin' 'and while the conductor 'olds my umbreller. Not as I wants any prisin' up, the same as a young feller give me with 'is shoulder close agin Mile End Gate, leastways where it did used to be afore it were swep' away, like Temple Bar, as sent me a-flyin' up that bus, as it's a mussy as I didn't go thro' the winders both sides, as I should 'ave done but for the 'eads of two parties as

I ketched reg'lar back-'anders both sides, as might 'ave proved fatal to one old gent as reg'lar took and swore at me for a blunderin' old cow, as should 'ave give 'im a bit of my mind if he 'adn't got out afore I'd got my breath, as were a-settin' in the corner a-pantin' like any bird as 'ad overflowed 'isself in comin' across the seas, as they do say as 'ow the swallers comes from them 'ot climats as they goes to for the winter, like a many others as is weak in the chest, but must be werry strong on the wing for to fly all that way, the same as them halbertrosses, as will keep up with a steamer for days together, the same as a shark, as some considers a sign of death at sea; but in my opinion is only a-lookin' out for wot he can get, like the rest of the world, as is full of sharks likewise, and gulls and swallers.

I see as some on 'em is a-tryin' for to bother Parlymint agin about that there feller 'Ortin, and a-goin' to lay papers afore 'em to prove as he's the real man arter all, as if Parlymint 'adn't got enuf to do without listenin' to that rubbish. The same as a old party as I've often see about when a-stoppin' along with Mrs. Padwick, as fancied as he were King of Ingland thro' wearin' of 'is 'air long, with a millingtary undress coat as 'ad been at the battle of Waterloo, and left a somethink to somebody as 'is grandpa wore at the battle of 'Astin's,

so he must 'ave been the blood royal, cos he called 'isself Steward, as were their old family name, as I knowed a 'ole family in that name, as must be a royal family accordin' to that. He was a werry nice, perlite old gent, and if it made 'im 'appy to fancy 'isself a king, why, it don't matter, as there's a many poor souls as fancies theirselves greater than kings, as I've see myself quite 'armless in goin' over Bedlam, as told me they was hangels, and couldn't fly cos they 'ad broke their wings and was a-moultin', as all seemed werry 'appy, poor dears.

I remembers well a party as lived over Camberwell way, as were ready to take 'is davy as he were King of France, thro' bein' that young Dolphin as them wile wretches tore away from 'is mother in the French Riverlution, as died of ill-usage thro' that wile cobbler as Lady Wittles did used to tell me about, as 'er own mother's lady'smaid as were French, remembered seein' the galinteen, and all the lords and ladies piled up in carts a-goin' to 'ave their heads chopped off for nothink, as was liberty with a wenjance, as the sayin' is, as them Commonyards, as they call 'em in Paris, is reg'lar pantin' for to do agin, only they're afeard of Old Beastmark, as 'ave got 'is weather heye up, and is only waitin' for a good escuse to collar the rest of France, as is a fine country, only they never will learn 'ow 'Ome Rule, as will no doubt brake out agin soon over some-

think, and then I do 'ope as they'll ketch it 'ot for their pains. This ere Gambetter he's an artful card, no doubt, but he ain't sich a fool as to think as he's a-goin' to make a fortun out of bein' a patriot, and as there ain't others as wants to play the same game, and is only waitin' for a chance jest to cut in, as they says at cards, for wotever else is pollytics but a game, as is played with shufflin' and odd tricks, tho' in course some are reg'lar trumps, tho' there's knaves among 'em as no doubt would like to pass theirselves off for kings and queens, with all the honours in their 'ands; but these here knaves will find it's a losin' game, as kings and queens will beat 'em in the long run, cos it's 'uman natur to look up to somebody the same as it's 'uman nature to like to be looked up to; the same as over in Horsetrailier they knights a man as can't 'ardly rite and read, as the others is pleased to see done, cos they 'opes as their turn will come, let alone their wives bein' called my lady; and so it is all over the world, leastways, that's wot Brown says, as 'ave not lived all these years, nor yet been so far without 'avin' of 'is eyes about 'im, and so knows men's little games, as is all much the same wherever you goes, whether it's Clapem Junction or the Cape of Good 'Ope, as every one is a-waitin' to go somewheres, so is all a-fightin' for the right train, whether black or white.

I must say as I'm glad them waggerbone Socialists and Commonists, as showed their true colours over the barbarous murder of this ere Czar, as they calls 'im, cos now kings and queens will know how to act by them as open henemies, and next time any of them waggerbones get kicked out of France they'd better go among their pals in Merryker, and openly declare themselves murderers, as they glories in bein', as let's 'ope will find their ways to the gallus, as is their deserts, tho' Mr. Bright do think it so shockin' to 'ang anyone, as is sham kindness, and tho' in course torturin' anyone to death is wot one thinks such willins deserves, nobody would really wish to 'ave done, but I must say if you kills a tiger or a deadly snake cos he's dangerous to 'uman life, tho' it ain't 'is own fault, why ever not strangle a wicked wretch of a man who knows as he didn't ort to take a feller-creetur's life, whether he's a king or a costermonger, as is both feller-creeturs; besides, as Brown were a-sayin' in talkin' to Joe Barnes, wot's the use of one man a-killin' another, and then gettin' killed 'isself for 'is pains. So Joe he said as the Italians got their liberty thro' a feller a-tryin' to blow up Lewy Napoleon, as made 'im take the part of the Italians.

Brown says, "Then, in my opinion, Lewy Napoleon only showed the white feather."

"Ah!" I says, "and he'd better 'ave been

a-lookin' arter 'Ome Rule in France, and then he wouldn't never 'ave got kicked out like he was in the hend, and sarve 'im right too, as made a nice mess of bein' a 'Ome Ruler over the French. I'm sure 'orrers won't never end, and to think of them waggerbones a-tryin' to blow up a live Lord Mare, as is wot no mortle soul ever dared to do but 'is good lady, and that only if he took too much turtle, as the green fat rankled in 'is constitution, and flew to 'is 'ead, as made 'im reel across the room, as give 'er a orful turn, thro' a-knowin' as he set 'is face agin dancin', as were no reason as he should run 'is 'ead agin the bedpost; but as to blowin' of 'im up with forty pounds of gunpowder, as they put under the bed, all as I've got to say is that the 'ousemaid must 'ave 'ad a finger in it, or pre'aps a chairwoman as they 'ad in for 'arf a day to clean up; not but wot I considers as the flue did ort to be taken up hevery day, as could not 'ave been that thick as to cover up the powder, as were all the world like Guy Fox, as considered 'isself a marter, and wrote a book about it, as I 'ave 'eard say is nothink but a mask of lies, and tho' the Lord Mare may be proud to be put on a footin' like with a hemperor, in my opinion it's false pride as goes before destruction, to 'ave yourself blowed up so as to be like one of them suvrins, you might as well 'ave your 'ead cut off to be like Lady

Jane Grey, or King Charles the Fust, as was both blood royal, tho' in course Jane Grey 'adn't no right to the crown, as were not the hact of a lady to take wot didn't belong to 'er, even if it was only 'arf a crown, as is wot a many as stooped to wile acts for to get.

But, law bless me, wot is a Lord Mare arter all but a empty bauble, as the sayin' is, and will soon be done away with, like Temple Bar, cos now the City and the West End is throwed into one there ain't no city left for the gates to be opened to the Queen, as was all rubbish, Joe Barnes says; but then as Brown pinted out 'arf life is made up of rubbish, the same as openin' Parlymints or a coronation, or anythink like State and Church either, if you comes to that, and we might as well all go back to bein' painted blue, and live in caves and 'oller trees, as is wot John Bright wouldn't like, no doubt, but for bein' afraid, as Gladstin might come and cut the tree down as he were perched up on the top branches on at roost, as would be sure to take the 'ighest place, and might come down a cropper, as is jest the sort of trick as Gladstin would like to play a Quaker, as he don't like in 'is 'art of 'arts, and is well beknown to be always full of 'is larks, but really didn't ought to be a-playin' under the trees with hedge tools at 'is time of life, a-'ackin' away at their trunks all about, as might

bring a branch down on 'is own 'ead, the same as old Wilkins as kep' the "Risin' Sun," and were stone deaf, and went and set on a branch as he were a-sawin' off, as growed in front of the tap door, not a-givin' a thought 'ow soon a saw cuts thro'; partikler with 'is weight at the hend, as snapped it off sudden, as brittle as glass, and if it 'adn't been for a cart full of grains as were standin' under that tree, he'd 'ave broke all 'is limbs, and as it was the grains werry nigh smothered 'im, let alone bein' that 'ot as pretty well scalded 'im, and spilte 'is clothes, the same as that black man as everyone thought 'ad fell in the wat of porter at one of them big breweries, as there was not a trace on 'im when they drawed the beer off, nor yet a westment of 'is clothes left, escept the purl buttons of 'is under-wes-cut, as in course nobody couldn't swear to, so he were given up for lost, but were only gone before, as the sayin' is, to Merryker, as he 'rote from to 'is wife, a-askin' 'er to foller 'im, as were all thro' bein' in debt, as is like drink, the ruin of 'underds, not but wot there's scores upon scores as is now a-oldin' of their 'eads werry 'igh, as would be in the workus but for bein' some time in debt, as kep' 'em afloat till they could get things for to prosper in busyness.

But as to that esplosion, thro' not a-knowin' the Lord Mare, nor yet the Lady Maress, escept

by 'earsay, I can't think 'ow they sleeps in their beds arter 'avin' forty pounds of powder under 'em, as might 'ave gone off thro' that old lady's candle, as come to the door, as might 'ave been lightin' of a fusee, as any one might do in even the dead of the night, and get a blow as would 'ave shook Queen Wictorier in 'er royal feather bed as far as Winsor Castle, thro' gunpowder bein' sich a thing to send anythink up in the hair. I couldn't sleep a-wink myself arter 'earin' about it, and were a-dreamin' as Brown were Guy Fox, and that I were bein' carried about in a chair, with matches and a lantern myself by a lot of boys, and Queen Wictorier a-standin' at 'er winder a-larfin', not but wot she's too much the lady for to turn any one into redicule, specially 'er own sect, as is well bekknown to be the real 'Ome Ruler arter all, whether it's 'er family or 'er people.

So I do 'ope as we shan't 'ave no more of them murders nor sassinashuns nowheres, as gives one the creeps to read about, and I say let everyone in Ireland and elsewhere take to rulin' 'isself and 'is 'ome in the right way, and then there'll be peace and quietness, assistin' 'Ome Rule wherever it is, cos there ain't no use in 'avin' rows; cos, as the poet Byron says—

Wotever brawls disturb the street,
There should be peace at home."

As there never can be if parties will delight to bark and bite by 'day and night, as not even birds in their little nests agrees, as shows if it's ever so 'umble there's no place like 'ome, as can't get on without 'Ome Rules.

THE END.

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